Hafa Adai!

Fate of the Ataligs now with jurors. PAGE 2

Public urged to cooperate with contact tracing. PAGE 6

75¢

Saipan Tribune

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TRAINING MISSION
U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt IIs assigned to the 25th Fighter Squadron, Osan Air Base, South Korea, fly in formation during a routine training mission in the Indo-Pacific, Aug. 19, 2020. The squadron was recently at the Farallon de Medinilla Range in the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands, honing their flight skills while deployed in Guam last Aug. 10-21.
Story and more photos on Page 7
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

OPA: Travel restrictions violated

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

So far, travel policies and practices differ across the CNMI government and no uniform government travel policy by regulation has been adopted. Also, there have been instances when the law that prohibits first and business class air travel have been violated.

These, among other findings, were discovered in a review the Office of the Public Auditor did on the CNMI government travel policy and Public Auditor Michael Pai recommended to the Legislature to review current travel

See OPA on Page 4

ADOPTED PAVILION
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The Sugar Dock pavilion behind TownHouse in Chalan Kanoa now sports new colors and has been beautified, thanks to the efforts of the Saipan Centennial Lions Club, which has adopted the pavilion. The club did a beach cleanup, tree planting, and repainting of the pavilion and its environs last Sunday morning.
Story on Page 3

All face-to-face learning stopped

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
limberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has officially shut down all face-to-face learning in both private and public schools as well as the Northern Marianas College—with the exception of the special education program.

Torres

Speaking at a radio news briefing last Friday, Torres said that, as recommended by the COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., it was decided that it would be best to shut down face-to-face instruction until further notice, given the recent spread of COVID-19 in the community and the recent surge in the number

See ALL on Page 4

AP EXCLUSIVE

US faces back-to-school laptop shortage

By JOCELYN GECKER and MICHAEL LIEDTKE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)— Schools across the United States are facing shortages and long delays, of up to several months, in getting this year's most crucial back-to-school supplies: the laptops and other equipment needed for online learning, an Associated Press investigation has found.

The world's three biggest computer companies, Lenovo, HP and Dell, have told school districts they have a shortage of nearly 5 million laptops, in some cases exacerbated by Trump administration sanc-

See US on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Aug. 24, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	820	87	907
Recovered	394	34	428
Active	385	87	472
Deaths	7	0	7
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			33,619

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	54	0	54
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			12,920*

*Total includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted to not report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

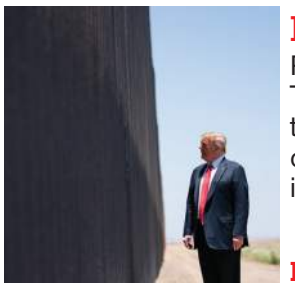
COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
Red: Least safe
Orange
Yellow
Blue
Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE

BUSINESS
The newly opened general merchandise store Etc. offers quality products at affordable prices.
PAGE 11



NATION
President Donald Trump has managed to fulfill a wide range of promises he made in 2016.
PAGE 12

LIFE & STYLE
A new book accuses Fox News of bending the truth to support President Donald Trump.
PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Fate of Mayor Atalig, Evelyn Atalig now with jurors

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Federal court jurors started deliberating yesterday afternoon in the corruption case against Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn Atalig. The jurors will continue their deliberation today, Tuesday, at 8:15am.

At the closing arguments yesterday, assistant U.S. attorney Eric S. O'Malley, counsel for the U.S. government, said there's ample evidence to show that Efraim Atalig and Evelyn Atalig arranged government-funded travels from Rota to San Diego, California; Saipan; Palau, and Guam, mainly for personal and not official reasons. He talked about all the eight trips and cited evidence and witnesses' testimony to support the charges against the Ataligs.

Efraim Atalig

"These defendants betrayed the trust of the people of the CNMI," said O'Malley. He urged the jurors to render a guilty verdict against the Ataligs as to all counts.

The Ataligs are being charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and false statement.

The prosecution cited at least eight trips taken by the Ataligs at different times in 2018 to Guam, Palau, the U.S. mainland, South Korea, and Saipan. O'Malley said the Ataligs were cheating the CNMI of taxpayers' money.

Pertaining to the San Diego, California trip in March 2018, O'Malley said the Ataligs spent five days for a one-day 9th Annual Chamorro Cultural Festival and each claimed eight days' worth of per diems. The prosecutor said the Ataligs and two others from Rota and two from Saipan were in that trip.

He questioned why Evelyn Atalig had to go on that trip when she was not invited and her presence there had no benefit to the people of Rota or the CNMI.

Regarding the April 2018 trip to Saipan, O'Malley said Efraim Atalig signed for the government travel authorizations, or TAs, for himself and Evelyn Atalig for the 23rd Micronesia Islands Forum and the Flame Tree Festival. Evidence shows that the Ataligs attended only the first day of the three-day events, O'Malley said, yet each one claimed three days' worth of per diems.

Evelyn Atalig

With respect to May 2018 trip to Palau, the prosecutor said the travel was coordinated by the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs-Aging Office. Again, Evelyn Atalig had no reason to be in that government-funded trip, he said.

Additionally, O'Malley said that Efraim Atalig towed with him two bodyguards on that trip, as if someone would try to assassinate him, and it appears to have been more of a honeymoon for the Ataligs than an official trip.

Regarding the June 2018 trip to Guam, the prosecutor said that Efraim Atalig signed government TAs for himself and eight other government employees to travel from Rota to Guam, as well as two TAs for plane charters, reportedly to check a U.S. Department of Defense office that handles the sale of surplus equipment.

O'Malley said that, a day before the flight to Guam, then-acting director of the CNMI/Guam Medical Referral Services Ana Maria Inos, who served as the gatekeeper of the CNMI for the DRMO, informed the mayor's group that she did not arrange for the visit, despite being instructed to do so. O'Malley said that Inos testified that she had a bad feeling about that trip, that she would somehow be used as a pawn, and that Inos knew there was a GOP rally the week of June 23, 2018 in Guam.

He said Efraim Atalig should have cancelled at least the second trip to Guam. "They knew that they did not have access [to the surplus store]," he said. Yet instead of going back to Rota, O'Malley said that Efraim Atalig and most of his team went to political rally the following day.

O'Malley said Efraim Atalig was asking Inos to perpetuate a fraud against the people of Rota and the CNMI.

The prosecutor also discussed other trips involving the Ataligs, including the August 2018 trip to Saipan for the Agricultural Fair. O'Malley said the primary purpose of that Saipan trip was to participate in a partisan GOP campaign rally. He said the Agricultural Fair was a one-day event, but the Ataligs remained on Saipan for three days. In addition to plane tickets, the Ataligs claimed three days of per diem, he said.

O'Malley said the Ataligs did not attend the fair, but Efraim Atalig joined a big group of people wearing similar shirts for a political campaign event of the GOP.

He said travels using government funds happened over and over again and that's what occurred in this case.

"Why was Evelyn Atalig all on these trips?" O'Malley asked.

He said the Ataligs lied to Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent Haejun Park and Office of the Public Auditor investigator Travis Hurst about the purpose of the Guam trip.

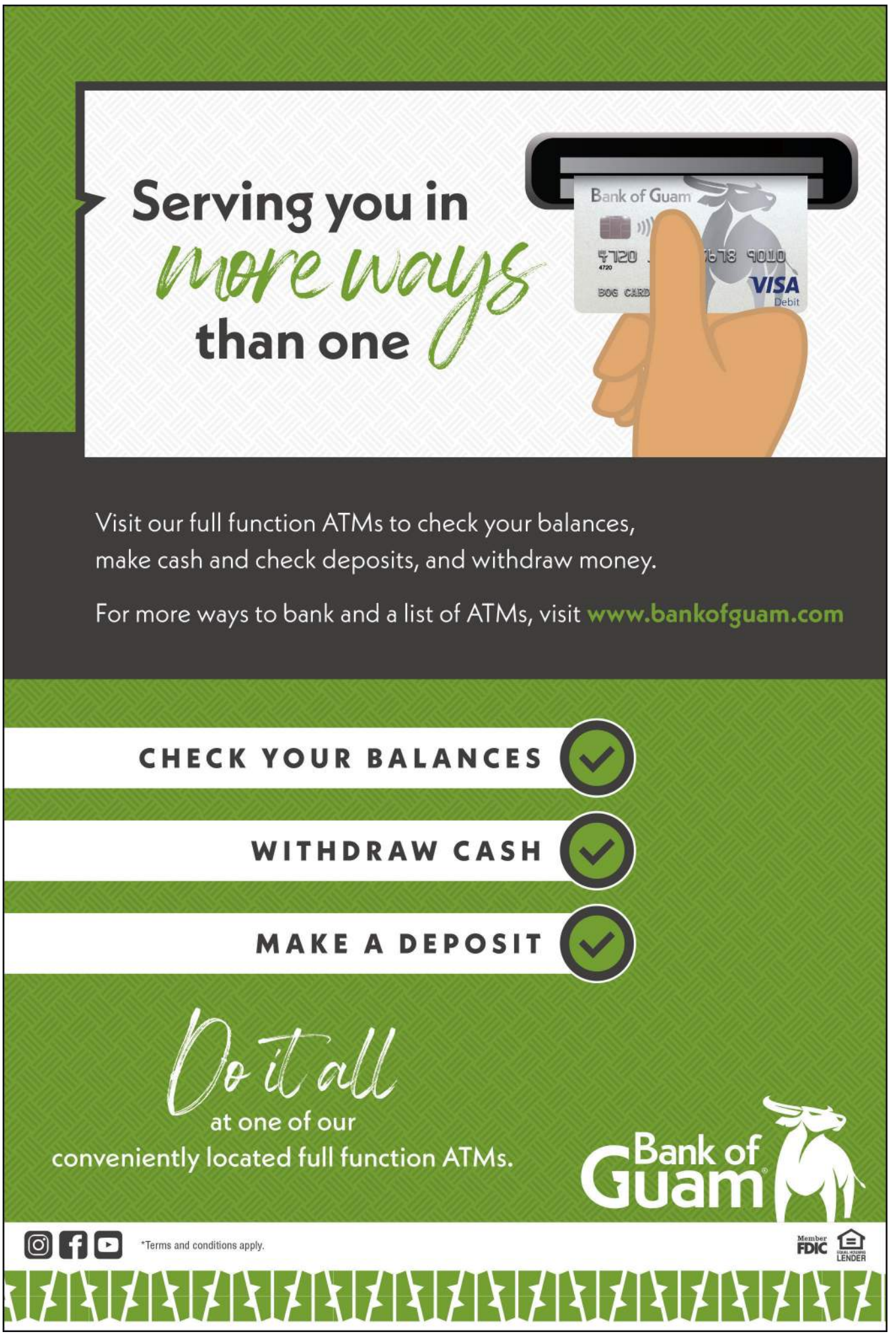
David G. Banes, the court-appointed counsel for Efraim Atalig, said the FBI, OPA, and the Department of Public Safety failed to do their duties and jobs because they took shortcuts in investigating this case.

He reiterated his attack on the credibility of Hurst's testimony and noted that the prosecution did not present any witness from the Department of Finance who stated being cheated or deceived by the Ataligs.

He said there is no evidence that it's against the law to submit inaccurate or incomplete trip reports. Banes said if someone gets sick during a trip, there is no problem as that person can still get his or her per diem.

Banes also pointed out that it is the Ataligs' fundamental right not to testify.

See FATE on Next Page



No commercial operations outside OK'd marijuana established zones

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Recognizing the absence of zoning on both Tinian and Rota, the Commonwealth Cannabis commissioners of both senatorial districts will be ensuring that the public will have opportunities to comment on the location and proposed activities of cannabis businesses on either island.

Commissioner Matt Deleon Guerrero explained at the Senate Committee on Cannabis and Gaming meeting Wednesday that, based on the regulations, in the absence of and prior to Saipan Local Law 21-15 on zoning, the commission has an interest to ensure that there is a level of control as to the location of certain marijuana industries, particularly lounges and retail operations, on Tinian and Rota.

"We feel, within our regulation, in our ability to hold hearings on applicants, that we would like to open up that opportunity when commercial applications come through, for the public to talk about the use of a particular land, as it relates to the industry," he said.

Sen. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota) raised issues concerning Rota Local Law 8-2, enacted in 1993 to establish a zoning code for the First Senatorial District.

"Rota Local Law 8-2… provided the Rota municipal council additional duties and responsibilities to act as zoning boards but this was never exercised or executed. In the same local law, the council is supposed to employ a zoning administrator and approve a land use plan, none of which are in existence," she said. "So this raises a concern with regards to commercial activity as to the sale of cannabis in nearby schools, churches and residential areas."

According to Guerrero, there are statutory restrictions on distances from churches, schools, daycare centers, and clinics and hospitals, and that there is a 500-foot requirement that overlays in all of the jurisdictions and municipalities, as to where or where can't a cannabis business operate.

"There was a need [to ensure] that the benefits are able to be maximized through locations that are accessible to tourists, and that any issues and problems can be limited when it comes to locations in residential or in village areas," Guerrero said. "Within our regulations, we have provisions for lounges and retail operations that, in addition to the 500-foot requirement, that we tell them that they can only operate within approved marijuana established zones, and the approval of those zones were set up to be established by the commission."

The commission, since opening its registry in early August, has been getting a lot of inquiries and interest, particularly on the cannabis commercial licensing side.

FATE

From Page 2

He said the jurors should disregard the other trips that the prosecution raised as the charges refer to only five trips.

Banes said the jurors did not hear any testimony from witnesses that Efraim Atalig was drinking or was at a beach during those trips. He said the prosecution failed to prove that the Ataligs were doing personal activity.

Banes described Evelyn Atalig as Rota's first lady, being the mayor's common-law wife.

The lawyer noted that in the Palau trip, both Ataligs were invited to participate the event.

Banes said the evidence and testimony showed that the Ataligs met present and former Palau presidents. He said it was not a free ride for Evelyn Atalig as witnesses testified that she helped promote Rota.

Banes said there's no evidence that the Guam political rally was organized back in May 2018.

Banes said witnesses testified that during the June 6, 2018, meeting on Rota, Efraim Atalig did not mention to his resident directors or Cabinet about a political rally in Guam.

He said Maria Inos testified that she could have and should have assisted Efraim Atalig in arranging the DRMO visit. Banes said Inos took upon herself to sabotage the trip and now the Ataligs are being charged. He said there was no evidence that Efraim Atalig asked Rota officials to attend the political rally in Guam.

Banes said the prosecution stated that Efraim Atalig should have been walking around at the Agricultural Fair on Saipan. He said it was raining hard at the time and Efraim Atalig has a serious health issue.

Banes also cited four other trips in which Efraim Atalig did not submit trips report and thus, did not get the full amount in per diems, while Evelyn Atalig also paid for her expenses.

"Where is the intent to cheat and deceive?" the lawyer asked.

Banes showed a video of the Liberation Parade in Guam in which Efraim Atalig was

See FATE on Next Page

Saipan Centennial Lions Club adopts Sugar Dock pavilion

The Saipan Centennial Lions Club has adopted the Sugar Dock pavilion beach behind TownHouse in Chalan Kanoa, with a commitment to clean it up and maintain it for public use.

Saipan Centennial Lions Club president Arecli Lizama extended her and the club's gratitude to the Division of Parks and Recreation and to acting director Ray Sablan for approving the club's adoption of the pavilion and its surroundings.

Toward this end, the Saipan Centennial Lions Club did a beach cleanup, tree planting, and repainting of the pavilion and its immediate environs last Sunday morning. They collected four trash bags and a total of six coconut plants were planted.

Lizama said she wants to club do more activities in the future. "We plan to provide trash bins in the area and also provide containers for cigarette butts. While we were cleaning the area we found a lot of cigarette butts and we would like to do something about it."

"We had 15 members who were able to volunteer and planted about six coconut plants, but we are trying to do more this week due to a lot of trees that have fallen from previous typhoons," Lizama added. "I want to thank all my members and I am very proud to be the president of the club. I am grateful for all officers and members for their continued support."

According to Lizama, the area still needs a lot of work to be done and the club plans to do more this Sunday. "We want to fix the roof area and the barbecue stand so that it will look nice for our tourists when they do come back and for the people of the CNMI to enjoy their time at the beach."

The club earlier distributed relief goods, did health fairs, cleanups, and many more. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

Reyes is MHS Dolphin's new battalion commander

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

C/LTC Jose Reyes was named this year's Marianas High School Dolphin Battalion commander during a change of command ceremony last Aug. 23 at the MHS grounds.

The battalion commander is the highest rank a junior reserve officer can go within the Junior Reserve Training Command, according to MHS Army instructor SFC Albert Lujan, who said they've already postponed the ceremony due to the pandemic situation.

The ceremony was initially meant to be held last Aug. 25, however, due to the new directives that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres implemented that imposed stricter rules on in-person social gatherings, the Dolphin Battalion had to do the change of command and promotion last Aug. 23. Also, since social distancing must be followed, only JROTC officers and parents were allowed to be present at the event.

For the next school year, Lujan expects from 150 to 160 students to participate in the program. Again, since social distancing must be implemented, Lujan said they still have yet to find another way on how to do the drill exercises for the cadets without violating the directives that are related to COVID-19 safety measures.

Also, most classes for JROTC will be done online, however, Lujan expects the program to still do in-person training for the younger students who are new to the program.

"Our leaders are going to be challenged to get them to do what they need to do—whether uploading a video of doing exercises and learning the ranks and whatnot," said Lujan. He said the real challenge is instilling discipline and responsibility in the cadets. This means that officers in the JROTC will have to figure out how to discipline cadets online.

"My leadership's focus is to improve our communication in order to accomplish all our plans for this year. One of them is enhancing the JROTC class online," said Reyes.

Former Dolphin BC C/LTC Daryll De Luna said that he has high hopes for Reyes and his leadership, adding that he believes that the pandemic will not "hinder" them from what they want to do this coming school year.

The rest of the Dolphin Battalion officers are the following:

- C/Major Jessica Liu, Dolphin Battalion executive officer
- C/CPT Denzel Gatbonton, adjutant officer
- C/1LT Jaibelle Nelmida, security and intelligence officer
- C/MAJ Lance Asistores, operations and training officer
- C/CPT Eejai Metran, supply and logistics officer
- C/1LT Christina Kim, public relations officer
- C/CSM Teody Valenzuela, responsible for the training of the enlisted cadets and assists the BC to reach the battalion's goal
- C/LTC Jose Reyes, Dolphin BC

USS *Ronald Reagan* pulls into Guam for port visit

ASAN, Guam—USS *Ronald Reagan* pulled into U.S. Naval Base Guam for a safe haven liberty port visit last Aug. 22.

The visit is the fifth of its kind, enhancing liberty options for 7th Fleet ships conducting COVID-19 mitigations. U.S. 7th Fleet flagship USS *Blue Ridge*, along with USS *Bunker Hill*, pulled into Guam for safe haven liberty port visits in early June. The Nimitz Carrier Strike group, consisting of aircraft carrier USS *Nimitz*, guided-missile cruiser USS *Princeton*, and guided-missile destroyers USS *Sterett* and USS *Ralph Johnson*, pulled into Guam for a safe haven liberty port visit June 24. Most recently, the guided-missile destroyer USS *Rafael Peralta* pulled into Guam at the end of July.

During *Ronald Reagan*'s liberty, sailors had access to specific designated areas on the pier and a secured beach on base. This type of liberty allows for quality of life port visits, boosting crew morale, readiness, and effectiveness, while mitigating the risk of contracting COVID-19.

"With the creation of safe haven liberty in Guam, the crew has the opportunity to enjoy some well-deserved rest and recreation," said Command Master Chief Chris King, USS *Ronald Reagan*. "The hardworking and dedicated sailors on board *Ronald Reagan* have performed at unmatched levels over the past several months to ensure readiness and forward presence in the Indo-Pacific region."

Sailors had the opportunity to unwind and enjoyed food and beverages along with WiFi installed on the pier, where personnel used their phones and laptops. A section of the beach was designated as a safe zone.

With the exception of a few mandatory personnel to ensure the ship's safe arrival, there was no interaction with any personnel outside the designated liberty areas. For the docking process, all COVID-19 mitigations were in place to include social distancing, masks, gloves, and minimal interactions.

Upon completion of sea trials in May 2020, *Reagan* returned to Yokosuka, embarked remaining crew completing Restriction of Movement Sequestration, and deployed June 8. Since the ship's Yokosuka departure, USS *Ronald Reagan* continues to operate in the Indo-Pacific region alongside allies and partners to demonstrate the United States' commitment to defense agreements, as well as to provide security and stability in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. No COVID-19 cases at-sea have been identified at this time. ***(PR)***

US

From Page 1

tions on Chinese suppliers, according to interviews with over two dozen U.S. schools, districts in 15 states, suppliers, computer companies and industry analysts.

As the school year begins virtually in many places because of the coronavirus, educators nationwide worry that computer shortfalls will compound the inequities—and the headaches for students, families and teachers.

"This is going to be like asking an artist to paint a picture without paint. You can't have a kid do distance learning without a computer," said Tom Baumgarten, superintendent of the Morongo County School District in California's Mojave Desert, where all 8,000 students qualify for free lunch and most need computers for distance learning.

Baumgarten was set to order 5,000 Lenovo Chromebooks in July when his vendor called him off, saying Lenovos were getting "stopped by a government agency because of a component from China that's not allowed here," he said. He switched to HPs and was told they would arrive in time for the first day of school Aug. 26. The delivery date then changed to September, then October. The district has about 4,000 old laptops that can serve roughly half of students, but what about the rest, Baumgarten asks rhetorically. "I'm very concerned that I'm not going to be able to get everyone a computer."

Chromebooks and other low-cost PCs are the computers of choice for most budget-strapped schools. The delays started in the spring and intensified because of high demand and disruptions of supply chains, the same reasons that toilet paper and other pandemic necessities flew off shelves a few months ago.

OPA

From Page 1

laws and address any conflicts over official government travel.

Pai recommended to the Department of Finance to adopt a uniform travel policy by regulation and restrict the purchase of first class, business class, or any other premium class designation and provide training and guidance how per diem is computed. The OPA report did not state which department was found to be in violation.

Pai said that implementing OPA's recommendations will address the report's findings to comply with the law.

The OPA audit pointed out that the Legislature passed Public Law 15-86 in September 2017, mandating a uniform government travel policy that will apply to all branches, departments, divisions, agencies, and autonomous agencies of the CNMI government. Yet it now appears that Finance has failed to do this.

OPA said travel policies, per diem rates, and calculations vary across all CNMI government entities, except for agencies that that have adopted the same policies and rates established by the Finance Department for the Executive Branch.

"This causes per diem disparity among government employees traveling on official government business, perhaps enriching some while penalizing others," OPA said.

In addition, OPA found instances where the CNMI government bought first or business class tickets, in violation of the law that prohibits premium air travel for government-paid travel outside the Commonwealth.

OPA also found conflicting legislation adopted by the Legislature requiring agencies in one law to follow a uniform travel policy by regulation, and in another, to adopt their own travel policy.

OPA said Finance's current travel policies and practices are guided by previous directives and memoranda issued by former governors and other government officials.

OPA said the existing per diem rates used by Finance were set more than two decades ago and have not been updated to determine if such rates are excessive or enough to accommodate current travel costs.

OPA said the current system makes the CNMI government vulnerable to waste of government funds. Given that the CNMI government is currently facing another economic plight, it is essential that adherence to the travel law be enforced to ensure that fraud, waste, and abuse does not occur, it said.

OPA added that establishing a uniform travel policy will not only ensure uniformity across the CNMI government, but will also demonstrate accountability of taxpayer dollars.

OPA said the Finance secretary has agreed with OPA's findings and stated that Finance is working to adopt a uniform regulation by Oct. 1, 2020. Finance has also notified the Travel Section employees and department heads regarding the current restrictions on the purchase of first class travel, that any travel authorizations with premium class travel will be returned immediately.

OPA also cited the CNMI Report on the Audit of Financial Statements for fiscal years 2015 and 2018, which states that travel expenditures increased by about 27% for autonomous agencies and about 152% for the CNMI Executive Branch.

In fiscal year 2018, the report says, the overall total travel expense for the CNMI reached $17.2 million, a 93% increase from the overall total in fiscal year 2015.

The OPA furnished copies of the report to Finance Secretary David Atalig, Senate President Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota), and Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan).

ALL

From Page 1

of cases on Guam.

"The task force, CHCC, and I have been working on, over the last several weeks, preserving the health and safety of students, families, teachers, administrators and staff. All public and private schools in the Commonwealth shall remain closed for in-person instruction and activities until further notice," he said.

Once the CNMI is able to sustain and determine exactly where it is at with the current cases and how widespread the community transmission is, then reopening of face-to-face learning will be discussed again, Torres added.

In addition to the shutdown of face-to face learning, school buildings, including administrative offices, shall also be closed to the public, except for employees or contractors necessary to conduct operations, facilitate instruction, distribute materials and equipment, or perform other necessary in person administrative or maintenance functions in order to provide continuity of learning for schools.

However, press secretary Kevin Bautista said the administration still permits and encourages both private and public schools and NMC to facilitate alternative modes of education, such as distance learning through online means.

"The task force is well aware that several schools have already initiated online learning, which is a positive thing. But, of course, given the news of the presence of community spread here in the CNMI, being proactive in terms of keeping the community safe, we want to be able to ensure that there's still a continuity of education and learning within the CNMI. So online education will continue uninterrupted. But we're still putting a stop on normal in-person instruction," he said.

Bautista said that, although face-to-face learning is prohibited under the new directives, the administration has made an exception for PSS' Special Education program.

"PSS, through its Special Education program, may be permitted to allow in-person structure for students with special needs, subject to review and approval of operational plans and inside assessment to ensure access for students with special needs who may need particular face-to-face attention…to help them with any type of learning," he said.

ATALIG

From Page 3

seen riding a carabao to lead Rota's float. Banes said Efraim Atalig did this because he wanted to promote Rota. Banes said Efraim Atalig, who has a health problem, was seen riding a carabao just to promote Rota and yet is being accused of very serious charges.

He said Efraim Atalig has been in public service for 28 years and for two years he has suffered and has been punished because of the charges.

Banes said the mayor trusts the jurors to come to a just verdict based on evidence.

"Let him go back to his ranch. Let him go back to his job. Let him go back to Rota. He has suffered enough. He's been punished enough," Banes said.

Steven P. Pixley, who spoke in defense of Evelyn Atalig at the trial, told the jurors that they have a duty, responsibility, and power to say "no" to the federal government, that the prosecution tried to belittle her role in the life of Efraim Atalig by constantly describing her as his girlfriend when, in fact, she is more of a common-law wife.

Pixley said witnesses testified that Evelyn Atalig once received the "Employee of the Year" award and that Efraim Atalig was not part of the selection team. Pixley said no evidence showed that Evelyn Atalig knew about the political rally in Guam, that, in fact, Evelyn Atalig was excited about going to the Guam surplus office.

He said the U.S. government is making an issue about conflict of interest, but the Ataligs are not being tried for conflict of interest in this case.

Pixley asked the jurors to render a not guilty verdict as the U.S. government failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt as to all charges.

A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES WRITTEN BY THE DCRM SUMMER INTERNS OF 2020

FROM RIDGE TO REEF

SALT, SUN AND SAND

BRITNEY ESPINOSA
2020 Summer Intern
DCRM Shoreline
Monitoring Program

I am definitely a beach girl. During childhood, I'd spend my weekends at the beach enjoying the salt water in my hair, the sun kissing my skin, and the sand between my toes — nothing could get any better than that! As the years went by, I noticed our beaches were changing. I've always been curious about the key factors that contribute to shoreline changes, besides climate change, and what I could do to help.

This summer, I was given a great opportunity to intern at the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM), under the Shoreline Monitoring Program alongside two other interns. The Shoreline Monitoring Program plays an important role in protecting our island's beaches. The program gathers data about the characteristics of a beach, such as it's water line, wrack line, vegetation, berm, and moat.

All the collected data is used to create a beach profile, and with that, coastal managers are able to take action and make efficient and manageable plans.

My partners and I are tasked to monitor western beaches. We use a Berger level, tape measure, and a rod to help complete our survey. We look at the characteristics and see how much has changed overtime. We must know the anatomy of a beach when noting down the characteristics. It's exciting to look for these features and interesting to see how much has changed. With the data collected, we are able to see if a beach is eroding (losing sand), accreting (gaining sand), or stable (no changes).

According to a global shoreline study by Luijendijk et al. (2018), 24% of the world's sandy beaches are eroding at rates exceeding 0.5 meters per year, while 28% are accreting (gaining sand) and 48% are stable.

I was also tasked to update DCRM's Story Map. With all the new data collected, I am able to update the beach profile and see the changes over time. I've worked with the ArcGIS software to create this story map. It was challenging at first because I was not familiar with the software, but the more I used it, the easier it was to navigate. This story map will be available for the public on the DCRM website, under the Shoreline Monitoring page.

This internship was an amazing experience. I've learned several things such as the different ongoing conservation efforts/ programs. It's convenient as I'm a freshman college student majoring in Natural Resource Management.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION

My name is Eloise Rose Lopez and I was given an amazing opportunity to participate in the Division of Coastal Resources Management's Summer Internship, under the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Environmental Surveillance Laboratory. This summer I have been learning how to collect and analyze marine and drinking waters, how the process works and why it is so important to follow each procedure when providing information for the public. When we collect samples, we have to make sure the steps on the SOP, or "Standard Operating Procedures", are exactly followed. For example, when we receive the samples, we make sure we identify the samples by using laboratory ID's designated for Microbiology or Chemistry. We have to be very efficient and accurate in our process, because of the importance of our service to the community.

In my time with the lab, I've found that when it comes to marine water, Enterococcus Bacteria is our main concern when it comes to the Microbiology, because being exposed to contaminated beaches can make you seriously ill with sore infections, diarrhea, etc. Where drinking water is concerned, it is defined as any type of water that is used to drink, shower, or wash. Our main concern for drinking water is Total Coliform and E. coli. Total Coliform can be caused through natural interferences, such as leaves and dust that fall into water tanks. E. coli, on the other hand, is commonly caused by fecal matter coming into contact with drinking water. It is very important for people to know the safety conditions of our waters, because if people are repeatedly exposed to contaminated water in our beaches and public water systems, the possibility of contracting serious illnesses increases.

Through my mentors, Ms. Charito Bautista, Mr. Melvin Piteg, Mr. Jamie Reyes, and Mr. Michael Flores, I was able to understand how properly testing our waters has a significance impact on our community.

The Journal of Environmental Quality states that, "A staggering number of people in the world are becoming ill and dying every year due to the microbial contamination of waters used for drinking, recreation, irrigation, and aquaculture" (Cabral, 2010; Pandey et al., 2014).

These two short months of my internship with the DEQ Laboratory taught me that water is a blessing to be careful with. As an aspiring teacher, I am hopeful that my learning here will help me teach my future students why clean water is important.I also hope to someday write and apply for grants so that I can help others around the world who are suffering with no access to clean and drinkable water.

ELOISE LOPEZ
2020 Summer Intern
DEQ Environmental
Surveillance Laboratory

FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY FOR THE 2021 COHORT VISIT WWW.DCRM.GOV.MP
@CNMIDCRM @GOINGCOASTAL_CNMI

Community urged to cooperate with contact tracing

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With reports of possible community transmission of the COVID-19 virus, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. needs the community to cooperate with contact tracing in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in the CNMI.

Speaking at last Friday's radio news briefing, CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said that the goal of not just CHCC but everyone is to derail and suppress the spread of COVID-19, which is why she is asking the public not to be afraid when asked by CHCC personnel for information.

Muña also reminded the public to continue to practice the three W's—wash your hands, wear your mask, and wait at a 6 feet distance—to stop the spread of the virus. This, she said, is meant to save lives and protect the elderly and those who are vulnerable.

The CNMI reimplemented some restrictions in people's movement starting yesterday, as a means to tamp down community transmission of the virus.

Muña said that they have also been monitoring the United States, Hawaii, and especially Guam, which has resulted in beefing up the point of entry protocols, including requiring all incoming travelers to be placed in a government quarantine facility.

According to Muña, since March, they have opened up access to care, which means that they have also opened up presumptive Medicaid (a policy option that allows hospitals to provide temporary Medicaid coverage to individuals likely to qualify for Medicaid).

Warren Villagomez, head of the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, echoed the importance of the community's cooperation with contact tracing investigation as a means to stop the spread of the virus. That could also mean patrons going into establishments, he said.

Villagomez stated that the task force has formed an enforcement group to go out and monitor how the restrictions are being implemented, as well as to help educate businesses or community members how to diminish the spread of COVID-19.

USPS launches new election mail website

WASHINGTON, D.C.—As part of its ongoing effort to ensure that voters and election officials have the information they need to successfully use the U.S. Mail to vote in the November general elections, the U.S. Postal Service has launched a new Election Mail website. The website, which provides clear and concise information about voting by mail, is available 24/7 by going to: *usps.com/votinginfo*.

A person drops into a mailbox application for mail-in ballots, in Omaha, Neb., Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2020.

AP

The Postal Service recognizes that many states are choosing to expand mail-in voting options in the upcoming elections and that there will likely be a significant increase in demand among postal customers to participate in those elections by using the mail. In response, the Postal Service has updated its website to serve both voting customers seeking information on how to use the mail to vote and election officials seeking resources to help make their administration of the upcoming elections a success.

For domestic voters, the website provides direct links to federal election resources as well as links to state-specific resources. For overseas and military voters, the new site provides additional information, including links to resources supporting their election participation.

The site also highlights what the Postal Service views as the most critical information for voters who opt to vote through the U.S. Mail: that, in requesting or casting a mail-in ballot, they not only must comply with their local jurisdictions' requirements, but also should start the process early. To allow sufficient time for voters to receive, complete and return ballots via the mail, the Postal Service strongly recommends that voters request ballots at the earliest point allowable, but no later than 15 days prior to the election date. The Postal Service also recommends that voters mail their ballots at least one week prior to their states' due dates to allow for timely receipt by election officials. Voters should contact their local election officials for further information about deadlines and other requirements.

In addition, the site provides resources to state and local election officials as part of the Postal Service's ongoing efforts to partner with such officials to make the elections a success. The site guides election officials in contacting Postal Service personnel to discuss how they can design their mailings in a manner that comports with postal regulations, improves mail piece visibility and ensures efficient processing as well as timely delivery. The site also provides links to information, such as the official 2020 Official Election Mail Kit (Kit 600) and the State and Local Election Officials User's Guide (Publication 632), both of which were distributed to 11,500 election officials earlier this year.

The U.S. Postal Service remains fully committed to fulfilling its role in the electoral process when policymakers choose to use our services in administering elections. The Postal Service can fully handle and deliver the anticipated increase in Election Mail volume and is continuing to coordinate with state and local election officials through November. Election officials and voters are being asked to be mindful of the Postal Service's established delivery standards and consider how the mail actually works, so that voters have adequate time to request, receive, complete and send their mail-in ballots. The Postal Service will continue to do everything in its power to efficiently handle and deliver Election Mail, including ballots, in a manner consistent with the proven processes and procedures that have been relied upon for years.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. ***(PR)***

PTAC webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars every Thursday in September! Webinars run from 10am-11:30am and will be conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

■ **Aug. 27 – How to Get WOSB Certified:** WOSB is now an official SBA certification program. We will discuss the new certification process as well as supporting document requirements.

■ **Sept. 3 – How to Get HUBZone Certified:** All of Guam and the CNMI are HUBZones. The Guam PTAC will take you through the certification process, the required supporting documents, and follow-up requirements from SBA.

■ **Sept. 10 – How to Get 8(a) Certified:** The SBA's 8(a) Program was created to help small, disadvantaged businesses compete in the federal procurement market. The Guam PTAC will help you navigate the forms and requirements of the 8a program.

■ **Sept. 17 – Cybersecurity for Federal Contractors:** Cybersecurity is a national security issue. We will discuss what Federal contractors can do to make sure they are complying with DOD requirements with respect to keeping data protected. DOD's upcoming Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification will be discussed.

■ **Sept. 24 – Responding to Requests for Proposals:** The Guam PTAC will walk participants through the common sections and clauses of an RFP as well as provide tips on developing a proposal in response to an RFP.

Register on our website, http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php. ***(PR)***

USCIS Guam Field Office closes for a week

BARRIGADA, Guam—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Guam Field Office closed for in-person services last Friday, Aug. 21, at noon. Officers continue to work from home, and emergency services are available.

The closure is in line with an executive order issued by Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero to slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). She called for a one-week closure to start at noon on Friday. The order is in place through Friday, Aug. 28.

Those who have an appointment for an interview will be rescheduled automatically. They, and those with biometrics appointments, will receive new appointment notices through the mail. Those who scheduled an appointment through InfoPass must make a new appointment at uscis.gov. Officers will provide limited availability for emergency services. For this, call the USCIS Contact Center at 1-800-375-5283.

For updates on closures, check https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-office-closings or call the USCIS Contact Center before traveling. ***(USCIS)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP20-OGM-103

SUBMISSION DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"TO CONDUCT FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE 2MW UTILITY SCALE GRID CONNECTED ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM FOR THE ISLAND OF ROTA. A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO **MR. FRANKIE F. ANGEL, GRANTS SPECIALIST**, VIA E-MAIL TO frankie.angel@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS 04:30 P.M., SEPTEMBER 03, 2020**.

PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR **10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, SEPTEMBER 09, 2020** AT THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, CAPITOL HILL, OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT. ***PLEASE NOTE ALL PARTICIPANTS/ATTENDEES ARE REQUIRED TO USE A MASK AND EXERCISE SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING.***

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. Box 500514, Saipan , MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp I Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE
AMENDMENT NO.1

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Special Board Meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance. Not more than ten (10) people are allowed in the conference room and social distancing will be enforced.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
c. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
a. Divisional Update

IV. OLD BUSINESS
a. CDBG-DR Action Plan
b. CDBG-CV Mortgage Assistance Payments
c. Personnel Matters

V. NEW BUSINESS

VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

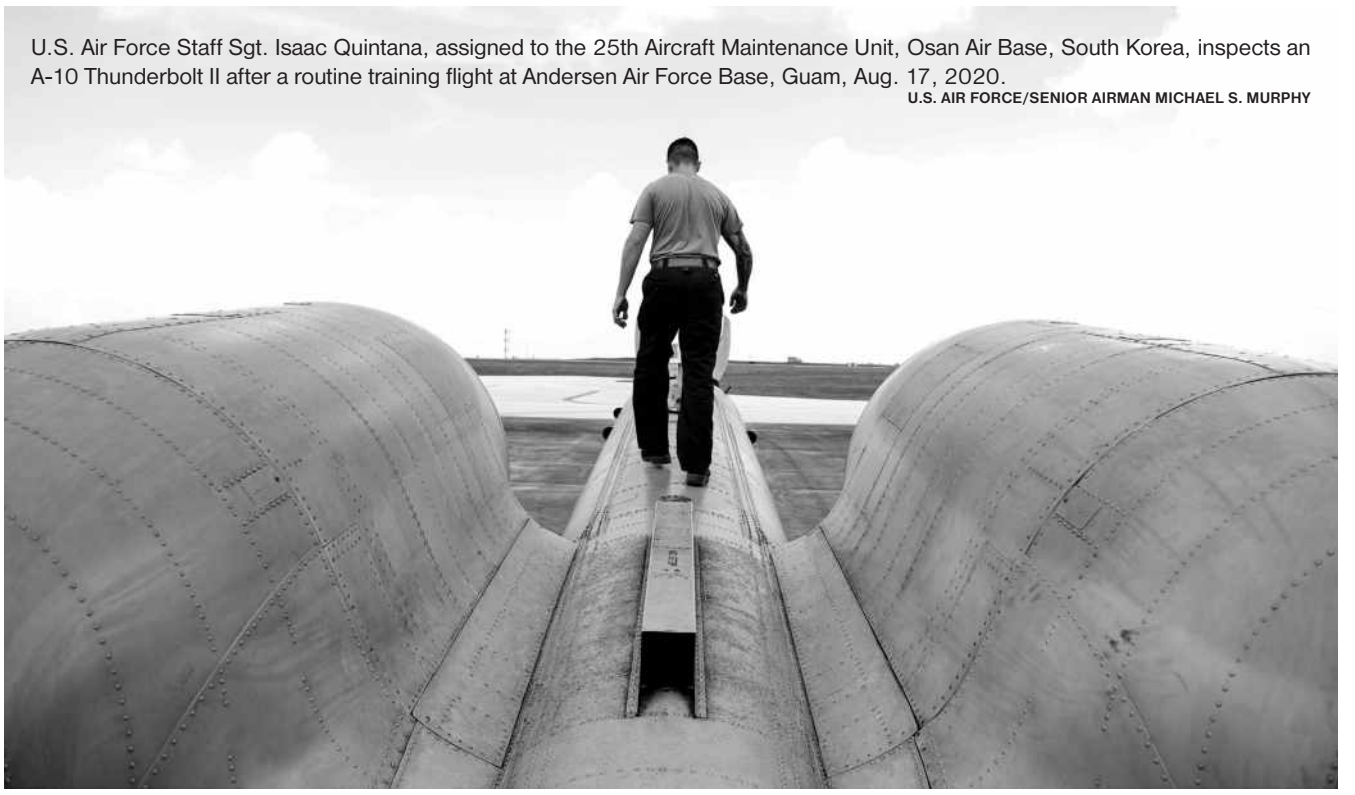
VIII. OTHER MATTERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Notes: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13 (a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/
Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman of the Board

By MICHAEL MURPHY
36TH WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Isaac Quintana, assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, Osan Air Base, South Korea, inspects an A-10 Thunderbolt II after a routine training flight at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

25th FS warthogs fly on Guam

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—The 25th Fighter Squadron, assigned to the 51st Fighter Wing, Osan Air Base, South Korea, were recently at the Farallon de Medinilla Range in the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands, honing their flight skills while deployed in Guam last Aug. 10-21.

The 25th FS regularly participates in training events that take place in the Indo-Pacific, such as Cobra Gold and the Rim of the Pacific. Through events like these, the 25th FS is able to strengthen and build relationships with partner nations and improve their capabilities in protecting American interest.

"Having the chance to come to Andersen demonstrates our capability to quickly relocate, establish, and operate our force wherever we may be needed at any time," said U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Austin Lasch, A-10 pilot. "We will be ready to operate side-by-side with our allies when needed, and our combined training in the Indo-Pacific region will allow us to do so seamlessly."

Lasch explained that their primary mission is to maintain peace and stability across the Indo-Pacific, which requires well-trained airmen and proven techniques.

"The training we're getting here is fantastic because it allows the pilots to practice and refine their weapons delivery," Lasch said. "We can practice various delivery techniques and see what works best in different situations. Having the FDM range at our disposal has been invaluable."

The change in pace for the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit gives a better idea of what their job will look like while deployed.

"We get a really big sense of accomplishment out here, especially when we get to travel," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Isaac Quintana, 25th AMU A-10 crew chief. "It shows us that we get to do real mission work. The workload changes when you are home compared to when you are deployed, and this environment simulates more of a deployed environment while still being labeled as training."

Quintana said that doing training missions like this puts crew chiefs in positions of safe freedom. Safe freedom meaning that a crew chief can make a call and then find out it wasn't necessarily the best one to make, but supervisors and superintendents are watching and working alongside crew chiefs to teach and increase overall capabilities in the AMU.

"It's really about how to be independent on your own jet," Quintana said. "You get to make calls out here that normally you wouldn't get to make back at home station. It gives airmen more leadership opportunities."

U.S. Air Force Maj. Michael Pak, left, assigned to the 25th Fighter Squadron, Osan Air Base, South Korea, and U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Cheyenne Loew, assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, OAB, place a U.S. flag into the cockpit of an A-10 Thunderbolt II before a routine training flight at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

U.S. Air Force Capt. Nick Castle, assigned to the 25th Fighter Squadron, Osan Air Base, South Korea, poses for a photo at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, after a routine training flight, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

Airmen from the Pennsylvania and Mississippi Air National Guard perform preflight inspections in support of 25th Fighter Squadron A-10 Thunderbolt II's conducting a routine training mission at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 19, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Cheyenne Loew, assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, Osan Air Base, South Korea, prepares to receive an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Joshua Arrowood, left, commander of the 25th Fighter Squadron, Osan Air Base, South Korea and U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Jordan Sayson, assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, OAB, pose for a photo after a routine training flight at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Cheyenne Loew, assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, Osan Air Base, South Korea, performs post-flight services on an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

Airmen assigned to the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, Osan Air Base, South Korea, prepare an A-10 Thunderbolt II for a routine training mission at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 17, 2020.
U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MICHAEL S. MURPHY

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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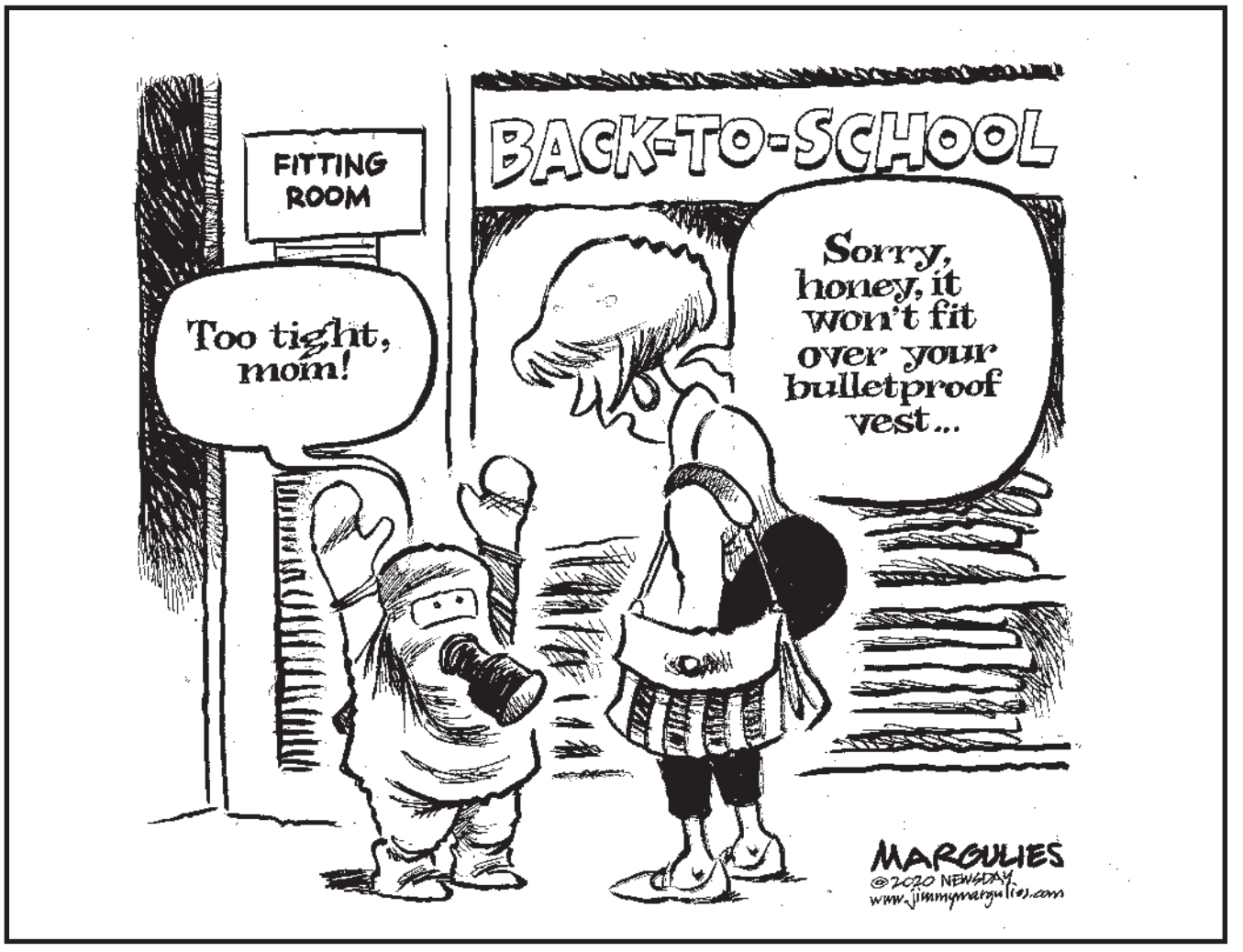
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association



EDITORIAL

Here's one way to help small businesses survive

The coronavirus pandemic has thrust millions of American small businesses into crisis mode, as they scramble for the cash they need to get through to more normal times. One way Congress can help: Protect them from predators looking to take their money and leave them bankrupt.

Bloomberg News has reported extensively on the "merchant cash advance" companies that prey on plumbers, pizzerias, nail salons and other small businesses across the country. They skirt lending laws by structuring their products as advances against future revenue. They employ bucket-shop marketing tactics, offering seemingly sweet deals that obscure outrageous fees and interest rates sometimes exceeding 400%. Their collection practices border on extortion, ranging from draining bank accounts without business owners' knowledge to surprise visits from a guy named Gino.

Now, entrepreneurs are particularly vulnerable, as lockdowns slam the economy and federal aid fails to reach many of those most in need. As Federal Trade Commissioner Rohit Chopra put it, "this is opening the door to even more predatory actors looking to profit from the pain of small business owners."

After the Bloomberg News investigation, officials addressed some specific cases and practices. The FTC, the Securities and Exchange Commission and New York's attorney general sued a number of companies—run by people including a convicted real estate scammer and a former drug trafficker—for transgressions ranging from threatening kidnapping to overcollecting on debts. And New York legislators shut down a legal loophole that allowed cash-advance companies to use the state's courts to seize the assets of small businesses nationwide, with no notice or hearing.

Yet the predatory behavior will keep coming back in new forms until Congress corrects a major omission: the lack of any consistent rules for lending to small businesses, akin to those that already exist for consumers. These should include clear disclosure of terms and interest rates, accountability for the brokers who sell the loans, and federal constraints on contracts that allow creditors to seize assets unilaterally. Legislators should also designate a federal agency to enforce the rules wherever they should apply.

Rep. Nydia M. Velazquez, the chairwoman of the House Small Business Committee, has introduced legislation that would do what's needed and put the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in charge. Her colleagues across the aisle, who often express admiration for small business, should offer their support. Entrepreneurs should be able to focus on getting through this crisis and doing what they do best, not trying to anticipate the myriad ways in which unscrupulous lenders might deceive them and destroy what they've built.

(c)2020 Bloomberg News

It's not always as easy as asking, 'Why not?'

By JONAH GOLDBERG
Tribune News Service

Jonah Goldberg is editor-in-chief of The Dispatch *and the host of The Remnant podcast. His Twitter handle is @JonahDispatch.*

In George Bernard Shaw's "Back to Methuselah," the serpent says to Eve in the Garden of Eden: "You see things; and you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say, 'Why not?'"

What's funny is that a version of this quote is often ascribed to Robert F. Kennedy as the perfect distillation of progressive idealism.

I don't think Kennedy's idealism was the root of all evil, or even remotely evil in its intent. But this idea—on display at the Democratic convention this week and an article of faith in Democratic politics—that all that prevents us from doing profound, "transformative" things is our lack of imagination can have objectively evil consequences.

Many of the Democrats who sought their party's nomination this year didn't just promise to socialize medicine, enact the Green New Deal, ban fracking, etc. They also insisted that it would be fairly easy to do. The only things that prevented such transformational policies were obstruction by villainous billionaires or special interests and the failure of previous politicians to think big enough.

More recently, progressive activists and politicians have endorsed the idea of abolishing the police and "canceling" rent.

The first problem with this sort of rhetoric is practical. Many of these proposals are simply bad ideas on the merits. Canceling rent and abolishing the police are catastrophically dumb ideas. If you cancel rent, landlords will be unable to pay for heat or electricity, never mind repairs. Countless plumbers, electricians, janitors, painters, et al. would lose their livelihoods. Landlords would default on their mortgage payments to banks. And banks would be stuck with properties that are essentially worthless, causing a cascading economic crisis that would make our current travails seem puny by comparison. And that's if the courts let any of this happen in the first place.

Truly abolishing the police would invite horrifying levels of violence, looting and robbery, as well as a riot of vigilantism as homeowners, business owners and other citizens took self-defense into their own hands.

The consequences of the Green New Deal or "Medicare for All" wouldn't be nearly as biblical, but reasonable people can still acknowledge they would involve massive trade-offs. Whether you think those trade-offs are worth it speaks volumes about where you stand politically.

Even if you think it would be worth the effort to destroy the fossil fuel industry and lay waste to the health care system as we know it, spending trillions of dollars borrowed from China, what can't be denied by serious people is that it would take enormous political effort over many years and many elections.

In other words, even if the Green New Deal or Medicare for All are necessary and desirable, it's grotesquely irresponsible to pretend that a single president or congressional majority could deliver them. Barack Obama moved heaven and earth to get the Affordable Care Act passed, and he barely did it. Doing so came at the cost of the rest of his legislative agenda, Democratic control of Congress and the jobs of more than 1,000 elected officials of his own party.

Many wonderful things have come from visionaries asking, "Why not?"—airplanes, antibiotics, vaccines, nuclear power. But the difference between scientific breakthroughs and political transformations is profound. Science begins on paper and methodically builds upward from the drawing board. The sorts of transformations politicians promise, including President Donald Trump, try to work backward from the desired result. Science begins with A and works its way to Z. The zealots want to start with Z and work their way back to A later.

Our constitutional system was set up to work the other way around—to start small at the local level, letting successes build upward by the power of example and the building of consensus. In recent years, though, we have become convinced that the transformation trickles down from the president rather than up from the people.

What makes this approach so dangerous is that people believe it can work. The zealots tell voters, "All you have to do is elect me or my team, and your work is done." Then, when reality bites back, the politicians and activists don't say, "Hey, I was wrong. This is really hard." They don't blame the hard work required to forge compromise implicit in a democratic system; they blame the sinister forces—billionaires, globalists, greedy corporations, etc.—that stymied the revolution from above. And that makes sense if you actually believed their agenda was easy and cost-free in the first place.

The serpent asks, "Why not?" because he knows the question fuels chaos and anger. The politicians ask, "Why not?" because they know not what they do.

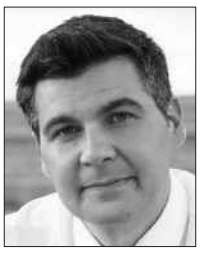
EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Liability waivers: 4 things to know

FINE PRINT

By JORDAN SUNDELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business, real-estate, estate-planning, and asset-protection law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including JZ Group. His columns—focused mainly on real estate, small business, and estate planning—are published every other Tuesday. Be sure to like the Fine Print on Facebook!

Clark surprised Lois with a skydiving jump for their anniversary. Excited at the new experience, they woke up early to head over to the airfield. Once there, they signed some paperwork, listened to a safety briefing, and then lifted off. When they reached altitude, Clark jumped first followed by Lois. The wind rushed past their ears; the lagoon sparkled in the morning light. All was well. And then Lois tried to deploy her chute. Nothing happened. Unpanicked, she reached for her secondary chute. But it didn't deploy either.

When the tears dry and the finger pointing stops, who pays? It will depend on the paperwork that Lois signed before jumping as well as other factors we'll discuss shortly.

Can't happen to you? Think again. If you've ever joined a gym, went scuba diving, or participated in a field trip, then you likely received a document known as a liability waiver at the start of the sign-up process. Most people sign the paper with little more than a glance. After all, waivers are a necessary evil if you want to do the activity. But as Clark and Lois discovered, a liability waiver is not something to take lightly if the worst happens.

That's because liability waivers are legal contracts. Sometimes they can be enforced in court. And when they are, the waiver wipes out important legal rights—namely your right to seek money or other compensation if you are injured during the activity.

As a result, it's useful to understand when a liability waiver will—and will not—be enforced. And that answer usually turns on four factors.

First, did the waiver violate state or public policy? If so, it automatically fails. For instance, in some states a company cannot force its employees to sign waivers concerning work activities. So, if Lois went on a tandem jump with a skydiving employee who also died during the accident, any liability waiver between the company and the employee would face an uphill battle to be enforced. Likewise, many states do not allow manufacturers and retailers to disclaim liability for defects in their products. Thus, even if Lois' liability waiver attempted to protect the parachute manufacturer, that part of the waiver likely would not survive because product liability is not the kind of risk that normally can be waived.

Second, did the injury result from ordinary negligence or a risk specifically discussed in the waiver? For instance, if the skydiving company checked the gear out beforehand but missed the problem, there's a decent chance that would be considered ordinary negligence and thus covered by the liability waiver. By contrast, if the injury flowed from an unforeseeable risk or a condition that the company knew about but failed to fix, then the liability waiver is on shaky ground. For example, if the skydiving company knew the parachute might have a problem and used it anyway, that likely would be gross negligence and therefore unprotected by the liability waiver.

Third, what does the liability waiver actually say and how does it say it? Clear, conspicuous language increases the odds a court will enforce a liability waiver; ambiguous, hidden words decrease those chances. For example, a document titled "Application" or "Registration" is much less likely to be enforced than a document titled "Waiver of Liability" or "Assumption of Risk." Similarly, a document that describes the risks in legalese using small font is less likely to withstand judicial scrutiny than a document that explains the risks in plain English using big, bold font that highlights the signer is waiving rights.

Fourth, if important facts were misrepresented, then it doesn't matter how clear and understandable the liability waiver may have been written. The misrepresentation will unravel the contract—assuming that you can prove the misrepresentation, which can be easier said than done. For instance, if the skydiving company said the parachute was brand new even though it had been used hundreds of times, then that misrepresentation might invalidate the liability waiver.

Bottom line: We all sign liability waivers. Many of them. But we seldom give them a moment's thought—not until something bad happens anyway. And then they become some of the most important contracts around. In those cases, the battle will center on how well written the contract is and the steps that the company took to identify and fix dangers.

Individuals who'd like to figure out whether a liability waiver blocks them from making a claim should speak with a lawyer. And the same for companies and service providers who want to make their liability waivers as ironclad as possible.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

C.O.V.I.D. COMIC RELIEF

Connolly Offers Vivid Imagistic Doggerel

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

T'was the Night Before X-Mask

T'was hot days in August during COVID 19
humans were social distancing all through the house
many old folks were practicing self-quarantine
except for one very well fed little brown mouse.
When what the heck did our virus weary ears hear
but promises of an old drug called Remdesivir
yet later many major epidemiologists
said benefits for Covid 19 were unclear.
Washable masks were hung by the door, dry and clean
some light blue, homemade, some a sight to be seen.
Most children were sleeping, with ear buds, in their beds
while visions of homeschooling run amuck in their heads.
Next day on TVs there was such a kerfuffle
when 45 appeared with no mask to muffle.
About then my smart phone Android started to rock
with messages and memes on FB and Tik Tok.
Then a little man came on quite bright and real quick
I knew in a moment that he knew every trick
about pandemics and what it meant to be sick.
Dr. Fauci spoke calmly and was ready to show
the science of coronavirus from head to toe,
AIDS research, epidemic problems from the past.
Trump couldn't stand his intellect, Fauci won't last.
More rapid than Tweets, off camera, Trump took aim
to put Dr. Fauci down, jealous of his acclaim.
Trump took hydroxychloroquine, says he's "still here."
while Dr. Fauci says we will have to wait for a year.
45 suggests Clorox injections? Or radioactive lights?
Demon seed? Quacks seem part of his virus fights.

—"God bless us everyone." Tiny Tim, in Charles Dickens novella, A Christmas Carol*, written in 1843.*

This week I started teaching again. I will be sleeping in a tent in the backyard

By EMILY KOLBOURN
THE HARTFORD COURANT

I am a high school English teacher and have been for 14 years. I am also a doctoral candidate, mother of a rising kindergartner and am married to a fellow high school teacher.

When I return to school this week for the professional development that will precede our students' start, I plan on kissing my 5-year-old and my husband goodbye. I'm going to school in my scrubs, wearing my PPE, keeping the windows in my classroom open and beginning to troubleshoot teaching and learning under the hybrid model.

When I return home, however, I will no longer set foot inside our home. My husband's medical conditions put him at greater risk for grave health repercussions or death from COVID-19, so I'm sleeping in a tent in our backyard and isolating myself from my husband and young son. We live in a modest home, not configured for quarantine.

Mine is a large tent. We've run electricity to it, and I have a camping shower and toilet. It could be worse.

If this seems extreme, it's what we feel is necessary to keep our family safe, not only because our family has grown accustomed to making health and safety a priority but because what we know about COVID-19 from a scientific and medical perspective has evolved. Although schools have planned a return to in-person instruction with featured protocols like the increased frequency of surface cleaning, these protocols represent May 2020, not August 2020, thinking about this virus. Just since July, The New York Times has published articles highlighting studies indicating that:

Children bear a greater viral load than adults; children 10-19 have the same capacity as adults to transmit and be sickened by the virus; this virus is airborne, and airborne particles are spread at a greater distance and in greater quantity than previously thought; toilet plumes—school restrooms are lid-less—fling aerosols in restrooms; schools that have opened in the United States have already experienced outbreaks and closures, thus amplifying the potential for community spread.

I am sleeping in a tent in our backyard because my return to school compromises my family's health and safety. The combination of the pandemic and the political will to return to in-person instruction forces choices on teachers that none of us should have to make. What will be worse for my 5-year-old: Missing out on countless mom-kisses, or potentially having to bury his father? Enduring remote learning or having his first experience of school be under pandemic conditions?

Many teachers in Connecticut and elsewhere will be left in a terrible predicament. Although we will be required to teach five days a week, our own children whose districts will open under the hybrid model will only have access to school two days a week. This will require us to shoulder unexpected financial burdens or take leaves under the expanded provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act. Districts that have not thought creatively about child care solutions are likely to experience mass absences of teachers.

I am well-aware of the problems associated with online learning. I experienced them myself this spring when I was teaching my high school students from home and undertaking my own doctoral coursework in an online model rife with challenges. Virtual learning is politically unpopular; however, it is the only option that keeps teachers, our families and the community at large safe. We ought to be using these next days and weeks to ensure that meaningful, robust, viable online learning is possible. We should not be practicing protocol related to surface cleaning.

In the meantime, I have been counting down my family's close-proximity moments. My son cries when he remembers that we won't be able to snuggle when I have to return to school. This tears me apart. Tuesday night was our last family meal together indoors and the last time I'll tuck my son into bed for the foreseeable future.

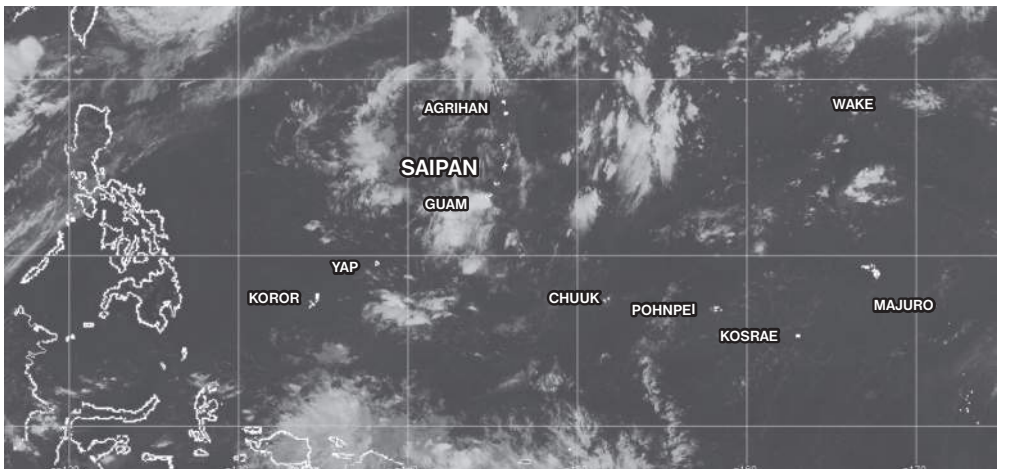
Emily Kilbourn teaches English at Ridgefield High School in Ridgefield, Connecticut.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy in the afternoon over Guam. South winds 5 to 10 mph becoming light and variable by evening.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy in the afternoon over Guam. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon near Guam.
89° 79°	89° 79°	88° 78°	88° 78°	89° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:21 AM, MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A broad surface trough is located just north of Saipan this morning with gentle northwest wind across the Marianas. Radar is beginning to perk up with showers after a period of stable weather overnight. Seas are still at 2 feet at all three buoys.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	88° / 76°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:03 AM	6:34 PM
Wednesday	6:03 AM	6:33 PM
Thursday	6:04 AM	6:32 PM
Friday	6:04 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	6:04 AM	6:31 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	11:47 AM	11:34 PM	-
Wednesday	9:50 AM	10:00 PM	-
Thursday	10:48 AM	10:46 PM	-
Friday	11:47 AM	11:34 PM	-
Saturday	12:47 PM	-	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Thunderstorms	59° / 50°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	91° / 70°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	89° / 82°
Honolulu	Sunny	87° / 75°
London	Wind	70° / 59°
Los Angeles	Sunny	85° / 67°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	89° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	56° / 39°
Miami	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
New York	Thunderstorms	92° / 69°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	96° / 81°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	84° / 61°
Busan	Sunny	88° / 81°
Rome	Sunny	93° / 68°
Salem	Thunderstorms	86° / 73°
San Francisco	Sunny	69° / 57°
Seoul	Thunderstorms	94° / 79°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	90° / 76°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	93° / 69°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
6:45 AM	HIGH TIDE	0.35
1:07 PM	LOW TIDE	1.74
6:46 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.04
-	-	-

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4, 6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

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Business

MARK RABAGO
Etc.'s $39 drawers have been the bestsellers at the newly opened store.

Etc. opens in Gualo Rai

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Looking for inexpensive but reliable drawers? Look no further than the newly opened Etc. along Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

Owner Jenny Lee said she opened the general merchandise store earlier this month "to help the community find quality products at an affordable price. Our products are all mixed with products such as coolers, furniture, tools, and household items."

The many different items being sold in the store is probably what made Lee chose the name Etc., which everyone knows is short for etcetera. Etcetera is a Latin expression that is used in English to mean "and other similar things."

Compared to other local stores, Etc. sells items at a relatively lower price, Lee said. "We are providing the cheapest prices in the market for our…items. Coolers are as low as $20, dishwashing detergent [is] for only $2, and shampoo [is] as low as $1.50."

Etc.'s $39 drawers have been the most saleable so far. It's not only inexpensive, but is also of high quality, according to Lee.

Etc. is also holding a promotional raffle to celebrate its opening. "Right now, our store is giving away two coolers once we reach 500 customers. Any purchase of $10 value will get a raffle ticket to join the giveaway," she said.

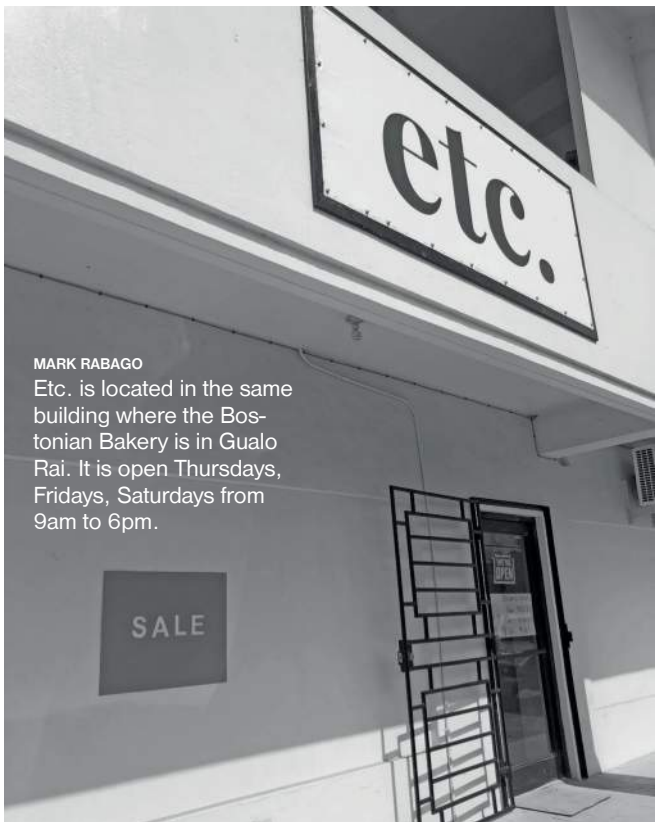
The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in some slow days for Etc., but Lee said the store will try to be resilient despite the crisis. "The pandemic has made the business very, very slow and trying to do our best to stay open."

In a way, the dearth of customers has allowed Etc. to easily comply with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. guidelines to stymie the spread of the coronavirus.

"We do not have heavy foot traffic at our shop and we sanitize everything. My staff sanitize their hands before any transaction and after. Customers are our top priority to ensure safety precautions and making sure all customers have their masks on before coming in our shop," said Lee.

Etc. is located in the same building where the Bostonian Bakery is in Gualo Rai. It is open Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays from 9am to 6pm.

"Etc. is here to provide the community affordable prices, please check out our shop for your household needs," said Lee.



MARK RABAGO
Etc. is located in the same building where the Bostonian Bakery is in Gualo Rai. It is open Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays from 9am to 6pm.

MARK RABAGO
Etc. will be giving away two coolers in a raffle once the store reaches 500 customers for every $10 purchase.

Cyprus denies new allegations in 'golden passport' scheme

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)—Cyprus on Sunday denied fresh allegations that it was granting citizenship to foreigners accused of crimes in exchange for millions in investments, insisting that all those who received a passport met all criteria in place at the time.

The Cypriot parliament last month beefed up the eligibility criteria for the so-called "golden passport" investment program, which has brought billions in revenue since its introduction following a 2013 financial crisis. The program has attracted many investors because a passport from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus automatically grants its holder citizenship to the entire 27-member European Union.

Cyprus' interior ministry said 12 foreigners named in an Al Jazeera report received citizenship under the investment program only after being approved by Cypriot and foreign agencies tasked with vetting such applications.

The report claimed that the 12—including four Russians, two people each from Ukraine, China and Iran, and one each from Venezuela and Vietnam—secured Cypriot passports after paying at least 2 million euros ($2.36 million) in investments despite being under investigation for an assortment of crimes such as corruption and fraud.

The Cypriot interior ministry said would look into the new information in the report.

Under the latest changes, new anti-money laundering rules will be used to bolster how prospective investors are vetted. Another clause makes it easier for investors involved in or convicted of a serious crime to have their Cypriot citizenship revoked.

Investors will still need to sink 2 million euros ($2.28 million) into the Cypriot economy, including buying a home, buying up stock in Cypriot companies or contributing to housing and entrepreneurship programs. The number of such citizenships is capped at 700 a year.

The Cypriot government last year moved to revoke the citizenship of 26 foreign investors from countries including Russia, Cambodia, Malaysia and Iran following reports that they had possibly broken the rules. Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades acknowledged at the time that "errors" may have been made in granting such "golden passports."

As shoppers stay away, small stores seek refuge online

NEW YORK (AP)—For small retailers across the country, the coronavirus outbreak has turned an already challenging business environment into never-ending uncertainty.

Amy Witt might have 20 customers on a good day in her Dallas women's clothing store, and then none the next.

"It's a rollercoaster we ride every day," says Witt, whose store, Velvet Window, reopened May 1 after being closed since March. "We're doing everything we can to cover expenses and keep the store stocked with inventory."

Many of Witt's older customers are still shy about going into stores, especially since the virus has resurged in Texas. As she reopened the store in May, Witt told The Associated Press she planned to use services like private shopping hours to encourage reluctant customers to come in. The strategy has helped but sales remain well below Witt's expectations. She hopes to boost sales by selling at an outdoor market where shoppers can feel more comfortable.

Still, Witt is grateful to be open—there are empty stores in the shopping center where Velvet Window is located.

Small retailers, especially those selling non-necessities like apparel, are still struggling months after state and local governments lifted shutdown orders aimed at containing the virus. With the virus far from under control in many areas, however, consumers worried about getting sick are staying home and doing their purchasing online or, if they venture out, going to big stores like Walmart and Target where they can do one-stop shopping.

The weak sales and erratic customer traffic have forced store owners to be creative in hopes of persuading customers to stop in rather than order from a big online retailer. But for some owners, disappointing sales and an uncertain outlook have forced them to close their stores for good and stake the future of their businesses on the internet.

Washington was one of the first epicenters of the virus, and one of the first states to shut down its economy. Ambika Singh felt the impact immediately: Her company, Armoire, rents clothing to professional women. Her customers, suddenly stuck at home, no longer needed outfits for the office, dinners and business trips.

Singh has permanently closed her two stores in Seattle, knowing they couldn't be sustained. She's adapted her online business to meet customers' rapidly changing needs—they wanted different clothes, like luxury loungewear or more dress shirts to look business-like on videoconferences even as they wore sweatpants

Having lost customers due to the weakened economy, Armoire's revenue is down about 35% from February, which was its best month ever. One of Singh's biggest challenges now is marketing to new customers as she tries to replace the shoppers who left.

Nation

Trump delivered on some big 2016 promises, but others unmet

AP
In this June 23, 2020, file photo, President Donald Trump tours a section of the border wall in San Luis, Ariz.

WASHINGTON (AP)—He's broken his pledge never to take a vacation or play golf for pleasure. His plan to update the nation's infrastructure has become a running punchline and he's dropped his threat to throw Army deserter Bowe Bergdahl out of a plane without a parachute. But behind the drama, chaos and tumult that has defined President Donald Trump's administration, the president has fulfilled a wide range of promises he made during his 2016 campaign.

It's a theme that will play a major role in the upcoming Republican National Convention, as the president tries to convince a weary nation that he deserves a second term, even when millions of Americans have been infected by the coronavirus, the economy is in tatters and racial tensions are boiling over.

"I'm the only candidate that gave you more than I promised in the campaign. It's true. I'm the only one ever, maybe ever," Trump said at a rally in battleground Arizona last week.

Back in 2016, Trump was criticized for failing to release detailed policy plans akin to those of his rival, Hillary Clinton. What Trump did do was lay out a vision for a new America—one driven by a nationalist self-interest and disregard for Democratic norms.

In the years since, Trump has acted on that vision, making good on his nativist immigration rhetoric, tearing back regulations on business and transforming America's role in the world by abandoning multilateral agreements and upending decades-old alliances, cheered on by many of his most loyal supporters and generating great alarm among his critics.

But will that matter when more than 175,000 Americans have died and more than 5.5 million have been infected by a virus that has hit the U.S. far harder than other industrialized nations?

"I think the golden egg of Trump's reelection effort is going to be the promises kept, such as getting two Supreme Court justices in power and keeping America out of foreign wars like Afghanistan and Iraq," said Douglas Brinkley, presidential historian at Rice University. "The problem he has is that his COVID response wasn't on the ballot in 2016 and he's gotten poor marks on how he's handled the pandemic. So that's put a wrinkle in his promises kept talking points."

Arguably Trump's biggest impact has been on immigration.

While Mexico never did pay for the "big, beautiful wall" Trump pledged to build along the 2,000-mile southern border—the signature promise of his 2016 campaign—the project is now underway, with 450 miles expected to be completed by the end of December. (Only a sliver of that, however—just 4 miles—has been built along stretches where no barrier stood before.) And Trump has succeeded in fundamentally transforming the nation's immigration system, despite resistance from the courts and little cooperation from Congress.

Using more than 400 executive actions, according to a recent analysis by the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute, Trump has effectively shut down the asylum system at the southwest border and slashed refugee admissions. At the same time, Trump has imposed a slew of new restrictions on legal immigration, with the pandemic spurring many more. With so few visas being processed and immigration fees collected, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has all but run out of money and is about to furlough large swaths of its workforce.

Some specific promises on immigration went unfulfilled: Trump failed to create a new "deportation force," never met his pledge to deport millions, didn't end funding for sanctuary cities that don't cooperate with immigration authorities and didn't move to end the constitutional right to birthright citizenship. But he did clamp down on "catch and release" of immigrants in the country illegally, enhance background screening of migrants and move to suspend immigration from a host of majority-Muslim nations—an evolution of the Muslin ban he floated during his campaign.

"They have used the tools that the executive branch has on immigration really to their ultimate extent. And they've been successful," said Doris Meissner, the director of the Migration Policy Institute's U.S. Immigration Policy Program and a former commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. "And you know, in many ways remarkably so because there's been very stiff resistance all the way."

Northern California firefighters dig in ahead of high winds

SCOTTS VALLEY, Calif. (AP)—Three massive wildfires chewed through parched Northern California landscape Sunday as firefighters raced to dig breaks and make other preparations ahead of a frightening weather system. That system was packing high winds and more of the lightning that sparked the huge blazes and scores of other fires around the state, putting nearly a quarter-million people under evacuation orders and warnings.

At the CZU Lightning Complex fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains, south of San Francisco, authorities said their effort was hindered by people who refused to heed evacuation orders and those who were using the chaos to steal. Santa Cruz County Sheriff Jim Hart said 100 officers were patrolling and anyone not authorized to be in an evacuation zone would be arrested.

"What we're hearing from the community is that there's a lot of looting going on," Hart said. He said eight people have been arrested or cited and "there's going to be more."

He and county District Attorney Jeff Rosell expressed anger at what Rosell called the "absolutely soulless" people who seek to victimize those already victimized by the fire. Among the victims was a fire commander who was robbed while helping coordinate efforts on Saturday.

Someone entered the commander's fire vehicle and stole personal items, including a wallet and "drained his bank account," said Chief Mark Brunton, a battalion chief for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire).

"I can't imagine a bigger low-life," Hart said, promising to catch him and vowing "the DA is going to hammer him."

The Santa Cruz fire is one of the "complexes," or groups of fires, burning on all sides of the San Francisco Bay Area. They were started by lightning strikes that were among 12,000 registered in the state in the past week.

The National Weather Service issued a "red flag" warning through Monday afternoon for the drought-stricken area, meaning extreme fire conditions including high temperatures, low humidity and wind gusts up to 65 mph (105 kph) that "may result in dangerous and unpredictable fire behavior."

In nearly a week, firefighters have gotten no more than the 17% containment for the LNU Lightning Complex fire in wine country north of San Francisco. It's been the most destructive blaze, accounting for five deaths and 845 destroyed homes and other buildings. It and a fire burning southeast of the Bay Area are among the five largest fires in state history, with both burning more than 500 square miles (1,295 square kilometers).

Top Trump aide Kellyanne Conway to leave White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—Kellyanne Conway, one of President Donald Trump's most influential and longest serving advisers, announced Sunday that she would be leaving the White House at the end of the month.

Conway, Trump's campaign manager during the stretch run of the 2016 race, was the first woman to successfully steer a White House bid, then became a senior counselor to the president. She informed Trump of her decision in the Oval Office.

Conway cited a need to spend time with her four children in a resignation letter she posted Sunday night. Her husband, George, had become an outspoken Trump critic and her family a subject of Washington's rumor mill.

"We disagree about plenty but we are united on what matters most: the kids," she wrote. "For now, and for my beloved children, it will be less drama, more mama."

She is still slated to speak at the Republican National Convention this week. Her husband, an attorney who renounced Trump after the 2016 campaign, had become a member of the Lincoln Project, an outside group of Republicans devoted to defeating Trump.

The politically adversarial marriage generated much speculation in the Beltway and online. George Conway also announced Sunday that he was taking a leave of absence from both Twitter and the Lincoln Project.

Kellyanne Conway worked for years as a Republican pollster and operative and originally supported Sen. Ted Cruz in the 2016 Republican primary. She moved over to the Trump campaign and that August became campaign manager as Stephen Bannon became campaign chairman; Bannon was indicted two days ago for fraud.

Conway cited a need to help her children"s remote learning during the coronavirus pandemic as a need to step away from her position. She had remained a trusted voice within the West Wing and spearheaded several initiatives, including on combating opioid abuse.

She was also known for her robust defense of the president in media appearances, at times delivering dizzying rebuttals while once extolling the virtues of "alternative facts" to support her case. Conway was also an informal adviser to the president's reelection effort but resisted moving over to the campaign.

Her departure comes at an inopportune time for Trump, who faces a deficit in the polls as the Republican National Convention begins on Monday. Her exit was first reported by The Washington Post.

Asia

South Korea sees 11th day of 3-digit increases

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea counted its 11th straight day of triple-digit daily jumps in coronavirus cases Monday after social distancing restrictions were tightened nationwide.

Most of the 266 new cases reported by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were in the Seoul metropolitan area, home to half of the country's 51 million people, but new infections were also reported in other major cities, including Busan, Daejeong and Sejong.

KCDC director Jeong Eunkyeong said it's likely the country will continue to report huge infection numbers in coming days as health workers scramble to trace and test contacts of virus carriers.

Officials consider the current outbreak South Korea's biggest crisis since the emergence of COVID-19, given the population density of the capital region and the spread of the virus among various sources.

The country since Sunday has banned larger gatherings, shut down nightspots and churches and removed fans from professional sports nationwide.

In other developments around the Asia-Pacific region:

■ China has gone eight days without reporting a new local case of COVID-19, with the Beijing International Film Festival among public events that are returning. The festival being held this week was postponed from April and is being held without a red carpet for the first time. Across the country, theaters have reopened after being closed for months and a Shanghai film festival that ended Aug. 2 drew almost 150,000 viewers to the city's cinemas. China's 16 new virus cases reported Monday were all in overseas travelers. China has reported 4,634 deaths from COVID-19 among 84,967 cases recorded since late last year. The semi-autonomous southern Chinese city of Hong Kong, where cases have spiked recently, added 25 new cases and one death to bring its totals to 4,682 cases with 77 deaths.

■ Australia's hard-hit Victoria state on Monday recorded its lowest tally of new coronavirus cases in eight weeks with the state capital Melbourne half way through a six-week lockdown. Victoria reported 116 new cases and 15 deaths. That is the lowest daily tally of new cases since 87 were reported on July 5. Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton said although daily case numbers are "jumping around" he expected they were on a downward trajectory. Health authorities have warned that the daily tally would need to fall to single digits or low double digits before the Melbourne lockdown is relaxed.

AP

A couple wearing face masks to help protect against the spread of the coronavirus walks along on a nearly empty shopping street in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020.

US envoy joins Taiwan president at military memorial

KINMEN, Taiwan (AP)—The U.S. envoy to Taiwan joined President Tsai Ing-wen at a military memorial service Sunday in a fresh show of warming relations that threatened to add to irritants in Washington's relations with Beijing.

Neither the director of the American Institute in Taiwan, William Brent Christensen, nor Tsai spoke at the annual event for soldiers killed by Chinese bombing in 1958 on Kinmen, a Taiwanese-controlled island near the mainland coast. Attendees, wearing masks as a precaution against the coronavirus, observed one minute of silence. Military personnel lit incense at soldiers' graves.

Washington has no official relations with Taiwan, which split with the communist-ruled mainland in 1949 following a civil war. The Trump administration has made gestures toward Taiwan as relations with Beijing soured. This month, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar became the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit, prompting a Chinese protest.

Despite that lack of official ties, the United States is Taiwan's most important ally and weapons supplier. The AIT is a non-profit corporation instead of an embassy but is staffed by State Department employees.

There was no immediate official Chinese comment Sunday about U.S. participation in the memorial.

Sunday marked the first appearance by an AIT director at the annual memorial.

Christensen has previously attended events with Tsai, but Sunday's was unusually high-profile. Some Taiwan TV channels broadcast the memorial live.

Christensen, who brought an eight-member delegation, and Tsai said nothing to reporters.

Previous Taiwanese presidents have spoken at the memorial. Tsai, who took office in 2016, made no speech last year but talked to reporters about events in Hong Kong.

Washington's support for Taiwan's democratically elected government has been a chronic irritant in relations with Beijing. More recently, the two sides are at odds over Beijing's technology ambitions, spying accusations, trade, the South China Sea and China's response to the virus pandemic.

The soldiers commemorated Sunday were killed after the mainland's People's Liberation Army began artillery attacks on Kinmen, which lies near the Chinese coast, on Aug. 23, 1958.

Their intensity declined the following October but they didn't end until Washington and Beijing formed official relations in 1979.

World

Israel's Netanyahu accepts compromise, avoids election

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Sunday that he had accepted a proposal to extend budget negotiations, preventing the government from collapsing and plunging the country into a new election.

In a nationally televised address, Netanyahu said that now was not the time to drag the country into a fourth parliamentary elections in less than two years.

"Now is the time for unity. Not for elections," he said.

Netanyahu and his rival and coalition partner, Benny Gantz, had faced a Monday night deadline to agree on a budget. Otherwise, the government would have collapsed and automatically triggered a new vote.

Netanyahu said that following a historic agreement to establish official relations with the United Arab Emirates, and with the country struggling with a coronavirus outbreak, he felt it was wrong to to go to elections.

He said he accepted a compromise that would give the sides an additional 100 days to reach a budget deal, and in the meantime direct spending to struggling areas of the economy and society.

His announcement came after Israeli lawmakers spent much of the day unsuccessfully trying to agree on a compromise.

The current political crisis pitting the prime minister against rival-turned-partner Gantz is ostensibly over the country's national budget.

But the crisis has deeper roots in the troubled partnership between Netanyahu and Gantz, economic troubles stemming from the country's coronavirus outbreak and the prime minister's ongoing corruption trial. Critics accuse Netanyahu of using the budget battle to force a new election in hopes of securing a friendlier parliament that could help solve his legal troubles.

After three deadlocked elections, Netanyahu and Gantz reached a power-sharing agreement in April to form a government to address the virus crisis. As part of their coalition deal, Netanyahu's Likud party and Gantz's Blue and White agreed to pass a two-year budget.

But Netanyahu has insisted on passing a budget to cover only the remainder of 2020, saying it will provide immediate assistance to the economy. Gantz is adamant that the government honor its agreement and pass one for 2020 and 2021. Their disagreement has again brought the country to the brink of political meltdown.

The Knesset, or parliament, must pass the legislation in two rounds of voting in parliament before Monday night's deadline.

But pushing back the deadline would only kick the budget crisis down the road. The two parties are at loggerheads over several key issues—including judicial appointments and the annexation of West Bank settlements—and the government has been beset by infighting. Gantz also complained that Netanyahu left him and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi in the dark about the deal announced earlier this month to normalize relations with the United Arab Emirates.

Iran: UN nuclear chief's visit to Tehran no link to US push

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran said Sunday that an upcoming visit this week by the head of the U.N.'s atomic watchdog agency to Tehran has nothing to do with a U.S. push to impose so-called "snapback" sanctions on Iran—even as Tehran acknowledged a recent explosion at a major uranium enrichment site was "sabotage."

The Trump administration last week dismissed near-universal opposition to its demand to restore all U.N. sanctions on Iran, declaring that a 30-day countdown for the "snapback" of penalties eased under the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers had begun.

Both U.S. allies and foes have joined forces to declare the action illegal and doomed to failure. The U.S. argues that Iran has violated the restrictions imposed on its nuclear program under the 2015 deal, a charge Tehran has dismissed.

Iran's official IRNA news agency quoted on Sunday Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA, Kazem Gharibadadi, as saying that the visit this week is "neither related to the snapback mechanism nor the U.S. demand."

Gharibabadi said the visit by the IAEA chief Rafael Grossi comes within "the framework of Iran's invitation."

"We do not allow others to manage Iran," he said, adding that Iran's trust in the IAEA has been "damaged in recent months."

He expressed hope Grossi's visit will lead to building trust. "It is important to assure Tehran that the agency will move based on impartiality, independence and professionalism," said Gharibabadi.

The IAEA said on Saturday that Grossi will head to Tehran to press Iranian authorities for access to sites where the country is thought to have stored or used undeclared nuclear material. Gharibabadi said Grossi was due to meet with Iranian officials on both Tuesday and Wednesday.

Later Sunday, Iran's semi-official Fars news agency quoted the spokesman of the country's atomic agency, Behrouz Kamalvandi, as saying that "security investigations confirm sabotage" in the July 2 blast at the Natanz nuclear facility. He said details would be released later at the proper time.

Iranian officials had initially downplayed the fire, first raising the possibility of sabotage days later, but have been careful not to directly blame the U.S. or Israel, whose officials heavily hinted they had a hand in the fire.

Kamalvandi also said the IAEA was seeking access and inspection at two "places" near the capital Tehran and central Iranian city of Isfahan.

The landmark 2015 nuclear deal was endorsed by a U.N. Security Council resolution and includes the snapback provision. President Donald Trump pulled America out of the accord in 2018 and imposed severe U.S. sanctions on Iran.

Last week, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a letter to the U.N. Security Council said the U.S. has no right to demand the restoration of U.N. sanctions, arguing that the U.S. lost the right to make demands when it withdrew from the accord.

Overdrive

2020 Hyundai Elantra GT N Line offers fun on a budget

By SCOTT STURGIS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

2020 Hyundai Elantra GT N Line: A little bit of budget-conscious fun?

Price: $24,630. $155 for floor mats.

Conventional wisdom: Car and Driver likes that it's "handsome all over, capacious cargo storage, frugal highway fuel economy," but note that the "base engine has feeble acceleration, limited fun factor, popular features require priciest model."

Marketer's pitch: "The sporty, spontaneous hatchback."

Reality: Definitely fun, and maybe even more budget conscious than we realize.

What's new: Last redesigned for the 2019 model year, the Elantra gets few changes for 2020.

The sporty N Line tested might be ripe for bargain hunters, as Hyundai says a new N Line is being developed for 2021. Whether it will land by then, though, seems uncertain, if that's all they have to say about it in August.

Up to speed: Though Car and Driver makes a negative reference to the Elantra's power level in the low-end price range, the upscale N Line doesn't have any of those issues. The 1.6-liter turbo GDI in the N-Line version creates a whopping 201 horsepower, a great deal for a little baby like the Elantra.

Though I couldn't find 0-60 times for the N Line, Car and Driver found an earlier version got there in 6.6 seconds, which is awesome for an Elantra.

Shifty: I've said it before and I'll say it again—if you're going to buy a little car, learn how to drive a stick. The 6-speed manual transmission raised the Elantra GT several levels higher on the fun spectrum than it would otherwise have landed. Little shiftable cars just want to zip from a stop, zig around turns, and zag to a stop. There are few joys this pure.

Of course, this means getting used to the upshift indicator light telling you it's time to shift during most of your driving time, because working the engine lightly is no fun at all, but that light is easy enough to ignore.

The clutch is not too hard on the left leg, either, though I didn't even put 100 miles on the odometer during this test week. And I certainly never found stop-and-go traffic.

On the curves: The little Elantra GT has been pretty fun in most of the incarnations I've been able to test, and this spirit remains alive and well. Country roads are a delight.

Highways, unfortunately, are a bit of a drag, as the Elantra GT hit bumps and road seams a little hard. Not as bouncy as a Soul, but still a little rickety.

Driver's Seat: It's a not-so-cheap version of a cheap car, so I wasn't preparing myself for the coddliness of a Lexus. But the GT's seats did OK, though; my wife didn't complain until I asked what she thought, so that means not so terrible.

Friends and stuff: The rear seat is not too awful. It's roomy in the feet and legs, a little less so in the head, but not as bad as I expected. The seat itself is low of comfort, and reclines a bit too much.

Thanks to the GT hatchback, cargo space is 24.9 cubic feet with the rear seat up and 55.1 with the seat folded. Pretty generous, for its size.

Play some tunes: The Elantra receives the standard Hyundai stereo, with 8-inch display and six speakers. Sound is really good for a basic Hyundai model, at least a B+. (Definitely plays rings around the basic Toyota version.)

Controls are easy to follow, with dials for volume and tuning, and the touchscreen is attractive enough. Plenty worthwhile for a less-expensive ride.

Keeping warm and cool: Giant dials control the temperature, and buttons control the fan speed and location. Seat heaters were also included with this car, which is a nice touch for the price range.

The vents themselves, though, are over designed and hard to direct; the Lovely Mrs. Passenger Seat felt too much air blowing on her for most of our travels together.

Fuel economy: When you ignore that shift indicator light, expect to pay the price. I averaged about 25 mpg in a raucous round of testing in Chester County. Feed the Elantra whatever.

Where it's built: Ulsan, South Korea

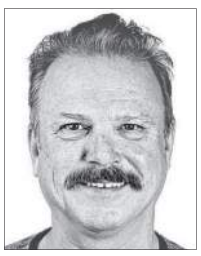
How it's built: Consumer Reports gives the Elantra GT a predicted reliability of 5 out of 5.

In the end: I wish I'd have been able to drive this more, so that must mean the Elantra GT gets my nod.

2020 Hyundai Elantra. (DREW PHILLIPS/HYUNDAI/TNS)

Motormouth: Owner's manual goes digital

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: You always say to read the book that spends most of its life in the glove compartment. I do my own basic maintenance on my vehicles and have always relied on the owner's manual. I recently purchased a 2019 Chrysler 300 from a dealer. The only book in the glove box was a very limited manual. I was told that for the complete manual I would have to download 492 pages off the Internet. Is this how all car manufacturers are dealing with owner's manuals?

A: It is a bit of a hassle to download manuals from the Internet, but I have grown to prefer them. You can save the file as a PDF, which is easily searchable using key words. Want to know the oil capacity? Enter the word "oil" into the search box and, boom. Save this owner's manual file on a flash drive and toss it in the glove compartment to partner with the little book.

Q: I am a General Motors trained driver. I know all the little tricks to get good gas mileage, until now. I purchased a 2017 Honda Ridgeline in October of 2019. I cannot get this vehicle to average better than 15.5 to 16.5 miles per gallon in the city. All the things like tire air pressure, clean air filter and a very light foot are taken into account. Any ideas?

A: I looked up the EPA estimate, which is 19 miles per gallon for city driving. Keep in mind that your mileage may vary depending on things like local traffic. On the test track, as you know, things are much different. I have driven the GM proving grounds (aka Black Lake) at Milford, Mich., enough to know.

Q: Somehow I missed your story on cleaning windshields. How can I find that? Furthermore, your thought about using dryer sheets for bugs was excellent.

A: Use your favorite search engine and include Tribune and Motormouth in the query. Meanwhile, here is the simple cleaner recipe I have published in previous columns.

2 cups water

1/4 cup white vinegar

1/2 teaspoon dishwashing soap (like Dawn)

By the way, newspaper makes an excellent polishing cloth to prevent streaks. It's also good to read.

Q: I recently took my 2018 Hyundai Sonata SEL+ to the dealer for routine service. It has about 15,000 miles on it. The technician said my fuel throttle was dirty and recommended a cleaning for about $140. The shop said it is a scheduled maintenance item but I can't even find the word "throttle" in the whole owner's manual, let alone in the recommended maintenance schedules. Is there any real need for this work or is it yet another addition to the repair shop's bottom line?

A: A dirty throttle body can affect fuel economy and may contribute to rough idle. But I don't think a 2-year-old vehicle with such low mileage would need such a service.

Q: I have a 2011 Honda Ridgeline with 78,000 miles. I'm experiencing a cloud of blue smoke on a cold start-up. I checked the oil and it was down about 1.5 quarts. Doing a little research, the advice was about 50/50 as to address the problem, and or live with it. Wondering your thoughts on cause and a possible fix.

A: Blue smoke after the car has been sitting overnight usually indicates worn valve guides of valve guide seals. Although you may live with it, I recommend fixing the problem, if not for yourself, for the rest of the breathing public.

Q: Decades ago, my cousin had a Monte Carlo equipped with a driver's seat that swiveled to facilitate entry and exit. I thought that was so cool! However, that's no longer seen, and I'm curious why not?

A: Swivel seats would be terrible in a crash.

Life & Style

‘Hoax’ book reveals extent of internal unease at Fox

NEW YORK (AP)—Brian Stelter knows critics accuse Fox News of bending the truth in order to maintain its staunch support of and closeness to President Donald Trump. As CNN media reporter and host of “Reliable Sources,” he’s often one of them.

He wasn’t prepared to hear the extent of concerns about the network’s direction by people who work there.

It was one of the reasons he wrote “Hoax: Donald Trump, Fox News, and the Dangerous Distortion of Truth,” which will be released Tuesday. The book shot from No. 340 to No. 1 on Amazon’s best-seller’s list following Stelter’s appearance with Rachel Maddow on MSNBC Friday.

Several people at Fox privately expressed worry to him about the growing power of prime-time opinion hosts Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity and Laura Ingraham at the expense of Fox’s news operation, he said.

“There is a real resistance inside Fox News,” Stelter told The Associated Press. “Nobody there would use that term. But there are many people there who are uncomfortable with Sean Hannity’s lies and Tucker Carlson’s xenophobia. It’s just that they are powerless, or feel powerless, and the prime-time stars have all the power. There are Trump true believers at Fox, but there are many others who are concerned about the damage being done, and don’t feel that they can speak out publicly.”

After being presented with details of the book and phone conversations Thursday and Saturday, a Fox News representative said the network was declining comment.

While Stelter relies on insider accounts for some juicy details—including that Hannity has privately expressed doubts about Trump despite being his biggest on-air fan—much of the disturbing content in “Hoax” didn’t require any special access. He reported what has been said on the air and how it echoed or was echoed by Trump’s Twitter feed.

AP
This combination of photo shows, from left, Tucker Carlson, host of “Tucker Carlson Tonight,” Laura Ingraham, host of “The Ingraham Angle,” and Sean Hannity, host of “Hannity” on Fox News.

Stelter is particularly scathing about the response to the coronavirus epidemic: how it was minimized by both Fox and the president, how the drug hydroxychloroquine was pushed even as studies showed it wasn’t effective against the virus, and the early cheerleading for reopening society.

“It’s readily apparent that Fox failed its viewers at key moments during the pandemic,” he wrote.

“This story is about a rot at the core of our politics,” he wrote. “It’s about an ongoing attack on the very idea of a free and fair press. It’s about the difference between news and propaganda. It’s about the difference between state media and the fourth estate.”

Fox News is a money machine, and although outlets like One America News Network, NewsMax and Sinclair Broadcasting have tried, none have made a serious dent in Fox’s dominance with conservative viewers and Trump fans. New Fox CEO Suzanne Scott has been praised for her financial stewardship.

Yet, Stelter’s account gives a sense that, from an editorial standpoint, there’s no one really in control—that Hannity, Carlson, Ingraham and the “Fox & Friends” morning team can essentially do what they want. The three prime-time hosts have personally advised Trump on policy, something that would be unthinkable at other news organizations.

Former ‘Glee’ star Lea Michele gives birth to baby boy

Michelle

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lea Michele is a mom of a baby boy.

A representative for Michele said Sunday that the former “Glee” star gave birth to her son on Aug. 20. She and her husband Zandy Reich welcomed their first child together.

Michele announced her pregnancy on Instagram in May. The actress-singer shared a photo of her baby bump with the caption “So grateful.”

The couple married last year.

Opera’s Domingo denies abusing power, seeks to clear name

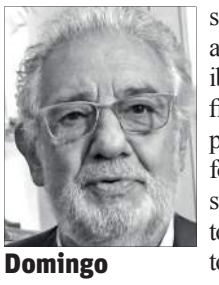
NAPLES, Italy (AP)—Opera legend Plácido Domingo denied ever abusing his power during his management tenure at two U.S. opera houses in an interview with The Associated Press on Sunday, as he embarks on a full-throttle campaign to clear his name after two investigations found credible accusations he had engaged in ‘’inappropriate conduct’’ with multiple women over a period of decades.

Domingo deflected direct questions about whether he ever sexually harassed women, accusations that were first reported by the AP last summer. The allegations have crippled his career in the United States, as well as his native Spain.

‘’I never promised a part to a singer, or never take a part from a singer,’’ he said. “I have spent my whole life helping, and you know, encouraging and driving people.”’ He added that responsibilities within opera companies are divided, meaning he never had sole sway over casting decisions.

‘’People that deserved to sing were singing,’’ he said.

Multiple performers told the AP that Domingo harassed them and abused his power while he held management positions at Los Angeles Opera and Washington National Opera. Numerous women said Domingo had dangled career opportunities as he pursued sexual relationships with them and then withdrew the offers or stopped hiring them when they rejected his advances.



Domingo

Investigations by LA Opera and the American Guild of Musical Artists found the sexual harassment allegations to be credible. LA Opera did not find he had abused his power, but AGMA found a clear pattern of such abuse, according to people who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the findings.

Two of Domingo’s managers and a spokesperson briefly cut off the interview when the singer was asked to respond to the fact that both investigations had found the sexual harassment accusations credible and that one had found a pattern of abuse.

AGMA has never released the full report of its findings, but Domingo’s team referred to two written statements by the union -- one for the public and one for members -- neither of which mentioned abuse of power. They also cited Washington Opera never launching an investigation as an indication that such allegations were baseless.

‘’Never, never, never,’’ Domingo said, when asked again if he had misused his power as a manager.

Dad’s ‘tall tales’ come up ever shorter on the truth

DEAR ABBY: My father, who is in his 60s, has always been a storyteller, but since retirement his tales have gotten longer, and so has his nose.

I suspect he's concerned about his waning influence in the world and that's why he puffs himself up. He tells people he has academic degrees he hasn't earned, takes credit for coining phrases that predated him and claims the hero role in events he couldn't possibly have participated in.

Most of the time I let it go. But sometimes he starts spouting "facts" that are not only untrue but also potentially harmful, or he takes credit for work done by others who deserve the recognition.

Is there a way to call him on it that lets him save face? Speaking to him privately does nothing. When prodded in a more truthful direction, he becomes immediately hostile. Suggesting other ways for him to contribute to the world (volunteering, etc.) have been non-starters. Before you ask, he has been to the doctor and this behavior isn't the result of a medical issue.

EMBARRASSED IN TEXAS

DEAR EMBARRASSED: It should be apparent to you by now that you can't change your father. His bids for respect and attention are sad, because the individuals being lied to usually learn the truth eventually.

Because we can't change the behavior of others, it's important to remember that we can change the way we react to them. Because correcting your father in public hasn't worked, if you catch him telling someone something you know is untrue—and which could be harmful healthwise or financially—contact the person privately and advise him or her to verify it with a doctor, lawyer or trusted financial adviser.

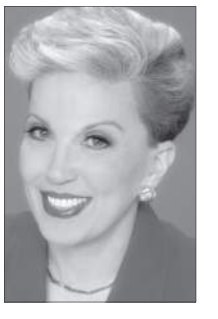
DEAR ABBY: I am divorced. Three years ago, I met a woman and had a brief relationship with her. She was estranged from her husband at the time. I fell deeply in love with her, but she decided to go back to him. It has been several years, and we have been "talking" again. She's now divorced, and she told me she has feelings for me. She's dating someone else, but she texts and calls me at least once a day.

I have sent her flowers and gifts for which she has thanked me, but despite all that she won't "date" me. I'm beside myself because I'm still very much in love with this woman. I know she loves me too, because she has said so. What do I do? I feel like pulling my hair out. Can you offer any advice?

WON'T DATE ME

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR WON'T: You feel like pulling your hair out because you have been getting mixed messages from your love object. Women who love men rarely refuse to date them. Women who are honest and ethical do not date one man and text and call ex-boyfriends at the same time. My advice is to do a 180, "detoxify" and find a lady who is emotionally and physically available.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

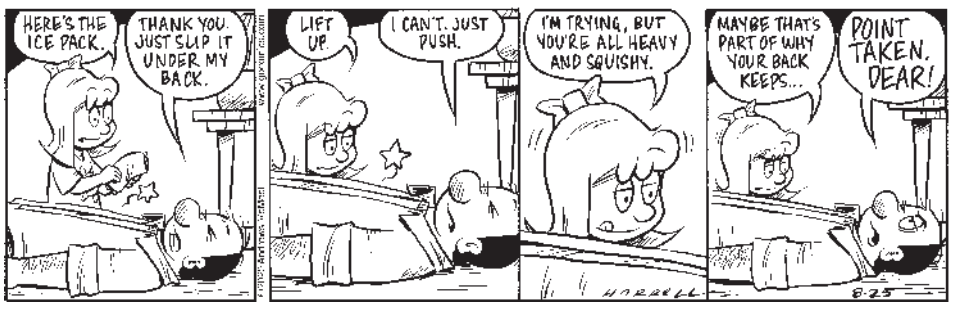
HEY, WHERE'S BINKY BETSY?
I KNOW I LEFT HER RIGHT HERE WHEN I WENT INSIDE. DID SOMEBODY TAKE HER?
EVERYTHING ELSE IS STILL HERE. WHERE DID MY DOLL GO?!
IF YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR DOLL AGAIN
I ALWAYS LIKE CUT-AND-PASTE.
HOW MUCH SHOULD WE ASK FOR? A HUNDRED DOLLARS?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HERE'S THE ICE PACK.
THANK YOU. JUST SLIP IT UNDER MY BACK.
LIFT UP.
I CAN'T. JUST PUSH.
I'M TRYING, BUT YOU'RE ALL HEAVY AND SQUISHY.
MAYBE THAT'S PART OF WHY YOUR BACK KEEPS...
POINT TAKEN, DEAR!
8-25

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

LET ME GUESS... YOU CAME IN ONLY TO ASK HOW I'M FEELING AND TO OFFER A SHOULDER TO LAY MY SORROWS ON.
JUST KIDDING. HERE'S YOUR STINKING BEER.
FOR A 4-DOLLAR DRAFT, I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

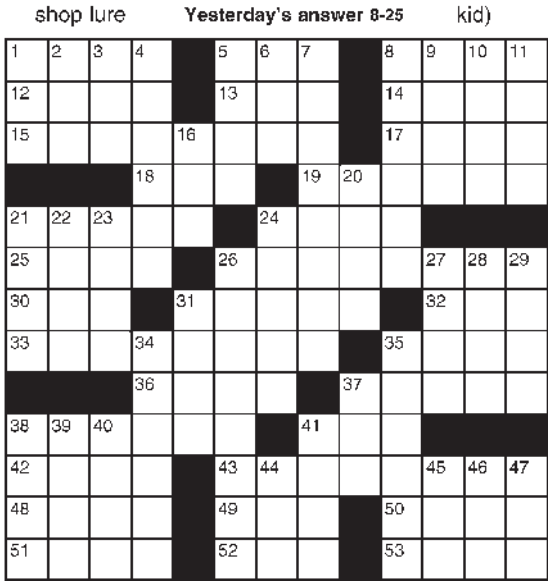
ACROSS
1 Cries of discovery
5 eBay offer
8 Locus
12 Comic Jay
13 Arctic explorer John
14 Despot
15 "Munich" actor
17 Congers
18 Scoundrel
19 Point the way
21 Chose
24 Church section
25 Entryway
26 Self-esteem enhancer
30 Hostel
31 Noted 2001 bankruptcy
32 Na Na lead-in
33 Golden breakfast roll
35 Skedaddled
36 Buffalo's lake
37 Bread shop lure
38 One of the Bachs
41 Hot tub
42 Help a hood
43 Mover's container
48 Exemplar of thinness
49 Corn spike
50 Sea eagle
51 "NFL Live" channel
52 Jamie Foxx biopic
53 Active sort

DOWN
1 Hearty quaff
2 That girl
3 Blackbird
4 Mia Hamm's sport
5 Pitt of "Moneyball"
6 007 creator Fleming
7 Ryan Reynolds title role of 2016
8 Sound system
9 "Understood"
10 Body powder
11 Formerly, once
16 Abysmal
20 Dust jacket ID
21 Garfield's pal
22 Vintage video game
23 Chinese secret society
24 Concur
26 Train driver
27 Norwegian seaport
28 Son of Noah
29 "There!"
31 Deserve
34 Defeated
35 Worn at the edges
37 Suitable
38 Green gem
39 Kimono ties
40 Rope fiber
41 Agile
44 Goat's plaint
45 Buddy
46 "A Chorus Line" song
47 Gen- — (baby boomer's kid)

Solution time: 22 mins.

W	I	G		N	O	R	A	H		F	R	A
A	C	E		O	P	E	N	A		I	O	S
N	I	L	E	R	I	V	E	R		L	O	T
			V	I	A		T	O	P	C	K	A
C	U	T	E	S	T		E	_	A	N		
A	S	I		K	F	G		D	R	A	F	T
M	E	L	T		S	I	N		M	M	I	I
P	R	E	O	P		N	I	T		E	L	K
		F	I	R	S		B	O	N	S	A	I
D	C	L	L	O	P		L	U	C			
R	I	O		M	I	_	E	P	C	S	T	S
U	S	O		O	R	A	T	E		E	E	E
G	E	R		S	C	N	S	C		A	X	C

Yesterday's answer 8-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Blake Lively, 33; Tim Burton, 62; Elvis Costello, 66; Sean Connery, 90.

Happy Birthday: Positive change is heading in your direction. Be open to suggestions, but only follow through with the ideas and plans that you feel passionate about. You are in control, so don't give the throttle to someone else. Be the one to come up with a plan and to follow through. Love, romance and success are all waiting for you; follow your heart. Your numbers are 6, 19, 25, 27, 32, 36, 41.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Meditate, retrace your steps or talk to a trusted friend about something that has been weighing on your mind. Assess your situation, and break away from whatever is holding you back. Get rid of what you no longer need. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Pay close attention to your relationships. Someone will disappoint you if you put too much faith in him or her. Take control, and dictate what you want to happen. If you exude confidence, you will come out on top. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Taking a risk or making an unexpected change will not go over well with the people close to you. Walk away from people who prompt you to do things you shouldn't. Truth matters; don't believe everything you hear. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Use your persuasive powers to get others to think your way. A last-minute arrangement to do something with someone you enjoy working with will help you get ahead. Generosity and thoughtfulness will pay off. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Plan to improve your surroundings or take care of unfinished chores. Set a strict budget, and do the work yourself to avoid falling behind financially. If possible, work extra hours to subsidize unexpected costs. Use your skills effectively. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Speak your mind. You may not like every response you receive, but it will help you put things in perspective and head in a direction that makes life easier. Trust and believe in your ability to excel. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* If you shirk your responsibilities, someone will overreact and make life miserable. Take care of business, and the freedom to do something you prefer will result. If you stretch the truth, expect to be caught and questioned. Play it safe. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Let your emotions dictate what you do next. Once you share your thoughts, you will have a better idea of where you stand and what's possible. Change is good, and you should welcome any opportunity that comes your way. Worry less and do more. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Keep moving, and do your best to avoid emotional situations that put you in a vulnerable position. Expect someone to leave you with added responsibilities. Don't evade issues; deal with matters swiftly to avoid repercussions. Say goodbye to an undependable friendship. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Do what makes you happy, and enjoy the people you like being around most. How you handle personal and professional affairs will encourage you to make healthier and more productive moves. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Remembering the past will help you avoid making the same mistake twice. Size up whatever situation you find yourself facing, and make adjustments to counter any negativity that comes your way. Focus on your strengths, and work on your weaknesses. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Stay mellow. If you overreact or let uncertainty get to you, it will be challenging to handle the emotional fallout. Focus on what you know, what you want and how best to reach your objective. Self-improvement is favored, and romance is encouraged. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are precise, opportunistic and ambitious. You are resourceful and dependable.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7			8		
2		4			6	
1	4	7		2		5
		4	2			
4	5			3	9	
		7	9			
2	3	1		5		9
8		9			4	
	6			1		

Difficulty Level ★★ 8/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	5	9	7	6	3	8	4	1
3	7	4	1	2	8	5	9	6
8	1	6	5	9	4	3	7	2
9	4	7	8	5	1	2	6	3
6	2	5	3	7	9	4	1	8
1	8	3	6	4	2	7	5	9
4	6	1	2	8	5	9	3	7
5	3	2	9	1	7	6	8	4
7	9	8	4	3	6	1	2	5

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

MADLY IN LOVE Solution: 13 letters

S	G	Ⓓ	E	T	I	C	X	E	L	K	N	I	W	T
A	N	Ⓝ	T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	T	C	E	R
F	I	Ⓘ	H	R	L	A	U	G	H	N	E	H	D	A
E	L	Ⓚ	I	P	E	E	D	U	E	T	A	A	D	V
R	E	S	E	E	S	N	G	M	O	P	A	R	I	E
O	E	E	K	S	E	S	E	V	P	D	O	M	N	L
D	F	I	I	I	V	G	E	Y	E	N	E	R	G	Y
A	L	L	R	E	A	D	N	A	B	S	U	H	P	R
Y	B	F	O	G	N	O	I	T	C	E	F	F	A	L
R	G	R	N	W	M	R	E	S	P	E	C	T	R	E
E	N	E	T	I	E	E	I	Y	V	T	R	E	T	W
T	I	T	R	F	L	R	H	C	E	O	S	T	N	E
S	T	T	A	E	I	E	S	E	H	S	I	U	E	J
Y	A	U	E	E	M	O	T	I	O	N	L	C	R	S
M	D	B	H	H	S	I	R	E	H	C	A	R	E	T

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Adore, Affection, Bliss, Butterflies, Care, Charm, Cherish, Cute, Dating, Deep, Desire, Devote, Emotion, Energy, Engagement, Enrich, Excited, Eyes, Feeling, Flowers, Friend, Happy, Heart, Hugs, Husband, Jewelry, Kind, Laugh, Like, Matrimony, Mystery, Partner, Respect, Safe, Smile, Travel, Treasure, Trust, Twinkle, Voice, Wedding, Wife

Yesterday's Answer: Anchorman

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 60 order online at: www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Doncic hits 3 at OT buzzer to lift Mavs

FLORIDA (AP)—Luka Doncic stepped back for a winning 3-pointer -- on a tender ankle, no less.

Another installment in the ever-growing legend of Doncic.

Doncic's deep shot at the buzzer capped a triple-double and the short-handed Dallas Mavericks beat the Los Angeles Clippers 135-133 in overtime Sunday to even the playoff series at two games apiece.

Doncic finished with 43 points, 17 rebounds and 13 assists for his second straight triple-double.

"We know this kid has got a flair for the dramatic," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. "He's a guy that lives for these moments."

To think, Doncic was a game-time decision due to the left ankle he hurt in Game 3. But once he stepped on the floor, he knew he would give it a go.

And once crunch time hit, the ankle wasn't even a thought.

"One of the best feelings I've ever had as a player," Doncic said about the winner. "Just something special."

Marcus Morris hit a 3-pointer with around 9 seconds remaining in OT to give the Clippers the lead. It simply set the stage for Doncic's winner over Reggie Jackson. His teammates rushed out to congratulate him.

AP

Dallas Mavericks' Luka Doncic, left, hits a winning three-point basket against Los Angeles Clippers' Reggie Jackson (1) during overtime of Game 4 of an NBA first-round playoff series, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

"Big-time players make big-time plays. He's a big-time player," teammate Trey Burke said. "He's proved it already in this league."

Doncic's theatrics helped the seventh-seeded Mavericks post their biggest playoff comeback win, overcoming a 21-point, second-quarter deficit. Their previous best was 19 against the Spurs in San Antonio during Game 5 of the 2003 Western Conference Finals.

Dallas used a 16-0 run in the third to take the lead -- and led by 12 points in the fourth before the Clippers rallied.

Lou Williams tied it at 121 by hitting two of three free throws with 50.6 seconds remaining in regulation. After Dallas failed to score on the next possession, the Clippers called a timeout to set up a play with 24.7 seconds left.

Kawhi Leonard's 3-point shot with 0.2 seconds remaining was off the mark. The Mavericks failed on a lob toward big man Boban Marjanovic to send it to overtime.

"Bottom line is the last play didn't lose the game for us," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said. "It was our entire play from the second quarter on."

Doncic didn't have center Kristaps Porzingis, who sat out with right knee soreness.

The 21-year-old Doncic hurt his left ankle in the last game. He hardly looked hampered, going 18 of 31 from the floor. He tested the ankle often, too, with jump stops, pivots and an impressive Euro-steps to gain separation.

Doncic got a breather to start the fourth quarter. He sat on the bench as trainers worked on his ankle. He then hopped up and down in the hallway and rode an exercise bike before returning with 8:33 remaining and the Mavericks leading 106-96.

The teams exchanged 3-pointer after 3-pointer down the stretch of the fourth, with the Clippers pulling to 119-117 on Leonard's 3-pointer with 1:56 left. The play was set up when Jackson saved a ball from going out of bounds on his end and tossed it all the way over to Leonard in the offensive end.

Williams scored 36 points off the bench for the second-seeded Clippers, and Leonard had 32. Paul George finished with nine points as his struggles continued. He was 3 of 14 from the field and is shooting 29% in the series.

Jazz 129, Nuggets 127

Donovan Mitchell scored 18 of his 51 points in the fourth quarter and Utah withstood a 50-point night from Jamal Murray to beat Denver and take a 3-1 series lead.

Mitchell was 15 of 27 from the floor and went 17 of 18 from the free throw line. He had 57 points in Game 1 and is averaging 39.5 points in the series. The Jazz can close it out in Game 5 on Tuesday.

Murray, who hit a long 3-pointer near the buzzer, had the most-ever by a Denver player in a postseason game, surpassing Spencer Haywood's mark of 45 in an ABA playoff contest on April 19, 1970. Murray also had 11 rebounds. Nikola Jokic added 29 points for Denver.

Mike Conley had 26 points for Utah in his second game since returning to the NBA bubble after leaving for the birth of his son.

Celtics 110, 76ers 106

Kemba Walker scored 32 points and Boston pulled away in fourth quarter to complete a first-round series sweep of Philadelphia.

Jayson Tatum added 28 points and had a playoff career-high 15 rebounds for Boston. The Celtics advanced to Eastern Conference semifinals against defending champion Toronto.

Joel Embiid led the 76ers with 30 points and 10 rebounds. Tobias Harris added 20 points and five rebounds.

Raptors 150, Nets 122

Norman Powell scored 29 points, fellow reserve Serge Ibaka added 27 points and 15 rebounds and Toronto steamrolled into the Eastern Conference semifinals by routing Brooklyn to complete a four-game sweep.

The Raptors lost Kyle Lowry to an ankle injury in the first quarter but the defending NBA champions had more than enough depth and power left to wrap up the first sweep in franchise history.

Pascal Siakam had 20 points and 10 assists for the Raptors. They upped their record to 11-1 in the bubble. Caris LeVert scored 35 points for Brooklyn.

Johnson wins, regains No. 1 ranking

NORTON, Mass. (AP)—Dark clouds gathered. Thunder rumbled. Lightning flashed on the horizon. Just as unsettling was seeing Dustin Johnson in complete control of his game with a performance worthy of his return to No. 1 in the world.

He was as close to unbeatable as he has ever been.

Johnson capped off his dominant week at The Northern Trust with an 8-under 63, finishing with a tap-in birdie in the dark following a storm delay for an 11-shot victory at the TPC Boston.

It was the largest margin of victory since Phil Mickelson won by 13 at the TPC Sugarloaf in 2006.

"The best I've ever seen him look," said Claude Harmon III, his swing coach, as he stood off the 18th green that was partially illuminated by the video board that flashed the scores of this astounding feat.

Johnson hit every green in regulation Sunday, and missed only three greens over his last 54 holes. His final 54 holes were rounds of 60-64-63.

Johnson finished at 30-under 254, making him only the third player in PGA Tour history to finish at 30 under or better. He missed the record by one shot set by Ernie Els in 2003 at Kapalua. Jordan Spieth also was 30 under at Kapalua in 2016. Johnson at least holds the record on the mainland.

"I knew I was playing well and I knew the guys were going to shoot low," Johnson said. "I was trying to get to 30 under. ... I've never shot 30 under in four rounds. Just something that I wanted to do."

That was about the only competition he faced.

Johnson won for the 22nd time in his career, and he never made it look easier. He said his game felt as good as the spring of 2017, when he won three straight tournaments—Riviera and two World Golf Championships—to first reach No. 1.

It was his fifth victory in a FedEx Cup playoff event, tied for most with Rory McIlroy.

Tiger shoots 66

Tiger Woods shot his lowest round of the year with a 66 on Sunday and said he is starting to find his "rhythm and flow" after some inconsistent displays since the PGA Tour restarted in June.

Woods fired four straight birdies to open his final round and finished on six-under-par 278 for the tournament—24 shots behind Johnson.

Woods, who has played three events since the Tour's resumption amid the COVID-19 pandemic, told reporters he had not been at his best since the restart.

"This has been a very different year for all of us, and that's one of the things that we've all had to make adjustments, and for me, I'm just now starting to get into the rhythm and flow of competing and playing again," he added.

Woods, who is fighting for enough points to earn a spot in the FedExCup final in East Lake, Atlanta, said he was encouraged by the finish ahead of the BMW Championship this month.

"I wish I'd have played a bit better this week to make it a little bit easier on me next week to try to get into East Lake, but this is going to be—if I played well, four out of five weeks, so it's going to be a busy stretch either way."

Bayern beats PSG for 6th Euro Cup

AP

Bayern' s Kingsley Coman, left, scores during their Champions League finals match against Paris Saint-Germain at the Luz Stadium in Lisbon, Portugal, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020.

LISBON, Portugal (AP)—Breaking the silence beating a drum, his Bayern Munich jersey replaced by a "Champions of Europe" T-shirt, Joshua Kimmich wanted to savor the scene of glory.

Two hours after setting up the goal that secured Bayern's sixth European Cup, Kimmich emerged from the tunnel to walk back onto the empty confetti-covered pitch where his team had beaten Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 on Sunday night.

Soon he was joined, sitting in the center circle, by David Alaba, the winners' medal around his bare chest, and Serge Gnabry in a Bayern hat, swigging from a bottle.

Before long the lights went out on the Stadium of Light.

In the near-darkness of the Lisbon stadium, the players remained in celebration and contemplation.

"When you win a title like this with brothers on the pitch," Kimmich had said shortly after the full-time whistle, "that's the maximum you can ask for."

On a continent where more than 200,000 have died from the coronavirus, the longest and most disrupted of peacetime men's European football seasons ended in emptiness and near silence.

Just as it was for so much of a first Champions League final played without fans.

Only a few hundred people were allowed into the Benfica stadium, because of pandemic restrictions, to see PSG academy graduate Kingsley Coman head in the winner from Kimmich's cross in the 59th minute.

While Bayern won its first continental final since 2013, PSG has yet to lift the European Cup despite more than $1 billion being spent on players in the nine years under Qatari ownership.

More than $500 million was spent on Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria, but PSG looked far from formidable or threatening against the Bavarian club that was more assured than the first-time European Cup finalists.

As the front three were frustrated in front of goal, it was instead a left winger who plays in Neymar's position, was born in Paris and started his career at PSG, who inflicted the blow.

It was Gnabry attacking down the right that unpicked the PSG defense before passing to Thomas Muller. The forward deftly clipped the ball back to Kimmich, who spotted Coman running unchecked into the penalty area.

The Frenchman netted a 43rd goal of a perfect European campaign that has seen Bayern become the first team to win all 11 Champions League matches.

"I feel a lot of joy, but also sadness for PSG," said Coman, who left his boyhood club in 2014—first for Juventus—after feeling undervalued. "It hurts my heart a bit."

The win capped an incredible transformation this season under Hansi Flick, who emerged from the shadows in November, with a promotion to the top coaching job with Bayern fourth in the Bundesliga.

"I remember in November the papers wrote that no one fears this Bayern team anymore, that no one respects it and how bad they are," Flick said. "I think the growth they underwent is sensational."

The European Cup will join the Bundesliga trophy—won for an eighth successive season—and the German Cup at Bayern.

"We all know where we've come from this season," Muller said. "There are no secrets, we just kept moving forward. Obviously we have a lot of quality in the team, but we also have the spirit. The boys are prepared to suffer. "

The season is now over—three months later than planned—with Bayern a treble winner just as it was in 2013.

Bayern joins deposed champion Liverpool as six-time champions of Europe, only behind AC Milan (seven) and Real Madrid (13). It was the first final to end 1-0 since Real Madrid beat Juventus in 1998 which was also the last final to feature teams who qualified as domestic champions.

"I don't know when that party will end," Flick said.

A night when PSG fans hoped to party on the Champs-Elysees ended with dozens clashing with French riot police. Back in Lisbon, when the final whistle blew, Neymar was in tears, embraced by rival Alaba.

"We weren't clinical enough," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel said. "We want Kylian and Ney to always score, but you can't ask for that."

PSG's footballing superstars were subdued at a final which lacked usual pre-match entertainment from pop stars.

Not that PSG lacked chances to take the lead at a final that should have been played in Istanbul in May, rather than the Portuguese capital in late August when seasons usually begin not end.

Only the presence of "Istanbul" on the match ball that Neymar struck at Bayern goalkeeperManuel Neuer in the 18th was a reminder here of the pandemic-enforced change of location.

Neymar did spark the move that saw Ander Herrera and Di Maria combine but the Argentine could only strike over. And an interchange between Herrera and Mbappe before halftime ended with a weak shot from the French forward.

It was a downbeat way to end a season that saw PSG sweep a fourth domestic treble in six seasons that underlines why it is on Europe's biggest stage where the team now has to prove its quality.

First trophy for Lewandowski

There was no goal or scoring record for Robert Lewandowski, but the Polish striker got to lift the Champions League trophy for the first time.

It was Bayern's first since 2013. That was also the last time Lewandowski had played in the Champions League final, with Borussia Dortmund in a losing effort. He'd reached the semifinals four times with Bayern in between appearances in the final.

"Never stop dreaming. Never give up when you fail. Work hard to achieve your goal," the 32-year-old Lewandowski tweeted along with a photo of him in front of the trophy while holding a Poland flag.

Lewandowski failed to score for the first time in a Champions League game this season, leaving him with 15 goals from 10 matches. He ended two goals shy of Cristiano's Ronaldo record of 17 in a single season in 2013-14.

Lewandowski has 50 Champions League goals with Bayern and 68 in total from nine seasons, behind only Ronaldo (130), Lionel Messi (115) and Raul Gonzalez (71). He ended the season with 55 goals in all competitions.

Tuchel defends tearful Neymar, Mbappe

Tuchel insisted Neymar "cannot do everything" after the star forward failed to score in the Champions League finals.

The Brazilian, along with star teammate Kylian Mbappe, did not score for PSG in the "Final Eight" tournament, failing to find the back of the net in the quarterfinals, semifinals and final.

Neymar's last 14 shots in the Champions League were all unsuccessful, while he lost 47 per cent of the touches he made against Bayern, per Opta.

But Tuchel backed Neymar, who was in tears post-match, and Mbappe, with the duo leading PSG to a domestic sweep of all four titles in France in 2019-20.

"Neymar has had a great tournament, he cannot do everything," the German boss said.

"Mbappe, it's a miracle that he was with us after sustaining a serious [ankle] injury [in July]."

After the match, speculation emerged that Tuchel could be replaced by former Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri.

Tuchel has won back-to-back Ligue 1 titles among other honours since arriving in 2018, and the former Borussia Dortmund coach was asked about his future.

"We will see, it is not always the head coach's decision we will talk about all that not only about my contract extension but also about how to rebuild the team," Tuchel said.

Ronaldo picks Mbappe over Neymar for Real Madrid

SPAIN—Real Madrid great Ronaldo believes the LaLiga champions should sign Kylian Mbappe ahead of Paris Saint-Germain teammate Neymar.

Mbappe has been tipped to make the move to Madrid at some stage in his career, with Los Blancos reportedly eyeing a 2021 transfer.

Former Barcelona forward Neymar, who joined PSG in a world-record deal (over $290 million) in 2017, has also been linked to Madrid previously.

But Brazilian legend Ronaldo, a LaLiga winner with Madrid in 2002-03, prefers France's Mbappe over countryman Neymar due to age.

"Right now, it is not that one is better than another, but if Real Madrid had to make a big investment, they should do so thinking about the future," Ronaldo said during a webinar hosted by Santander.

"Neymar is 28 years old and Mbappe is 22. As an investment, it would be more logical to bring the younger [of the two]."

Neymar, who won the 2015 Champions League with Barca, and PSG have already claimed Ligue 1, Coupe de France, Coupe de la Ligue and Trophee des Champions in 2019-20.

"He needs to win the Champions League to complete his season," Ronaldo said of Neymar. "He has played very well in the last few games, especially in this final phase in Portugal. He has created many scoring chances, but he has lacked calmness to finish off moves."

Darvish pitches Cubs past White Sox

CHICAGO (AP)—Chicago Cubs ace Yu Darvish is rolling.

Not even the slugging White Sox could take him down.

Darvish struck out 10 in his career-high fifth consecutive victory, and the Cubs beat the White Sox 2-1 on Sunday to stop the South Siders' seven-game win streak.

"Seeing what he did out there was spectacular," teammate Kyle Schwarber said.

Schwarber hit a two-run homer in the sixth inning as the Cubs won for just the fourth time in their last 11 games. The NL Central leaders were outscored 17-5 in the first two games of the series.

"What I was trying to do, when I tried to throw a chase pitch—slider, cutter mixed in—that works," Darvish said. "But when I tried to go fastball in or sinker in, they hit real well."

Jose Abreu went deep for the White Sox in the second, matching a major league record with a home run in four consecutive at-bats. Abreu connected five times in the first two games against the Cubs, including three homers and four RBI in Saturday night's 7-4 win.

AP

Chicago Cubs starting pitcher Yu Darvish delivers against the Chicago White Sox during the second inning of a baseball game, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020, in Chicago.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE				
AL EAST	W	L	PCT	GB
Tampa Bay	19	10	.655	0.0
NY Yankees	16	9	.640	1.0
Toronto	13	13	.500	4.5
Baltimore	14	14	.500	4.5
Boston	9	20	.310	10.0
AL CENTRAL				
Minnesota	19	10	.655	0.0
Cleveland	17	11	.607	1.5
Chi White Sox	17	12	.586	2.0
Detroit	11	15	.423	6.5
Kansas City	11	17	.393	7.5
AL WEST				
Oakland	20	9	.690	0.0
Houston	15	13	.536	4.5
Texas	10	17	.370	9.0
Seattle	11	19	.367	9.5
LA Angels	9	20	.310	11.0
NATIONAL LEAGUE				
NL EAST				
Atlanta	16	12	.571	0.0
Miami	11	11	.500	2.0
NY Mets	12	14	.462	3.0
Washington	11	14	.440	3.5
Philadelphia	10	14	.417	4.0
NL CENTRAL				
Chi Cubs	17	10	.630	0.0
St. Louis	9	8	.529	3.0
Cincinnati	11	15	.423	5.5
Milwaukee	11	15	.423	5.5
Pittsburgh	7	17	.292	8.5
NL WEST				
LA Dodgers	22	8	.733	0.0
San Diego	18	12	.600	4.0
San Francisco	14	16	.467	8.0
Colorado	13	15	.464	8.0
Arizona	13	16	.448	8.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dodgers 11, Rockies 3

Kike Hernandez hit a three-run drive and Mookie Betts went deep twice in the Dodgers' seven-homer attack, powering Los Angeles past the Colorado Rockies for a three-game sweep.

The Dodgers are the only team in the majors yet to lose a series, unbeaten in 11. They have won 11 of 12 games overall and own the best record in baseball at 22-8 at the halfway point of this abbreviated season.

Padres 5, Astros 3

Fernando Tatis Jr. made two spectacular plays at shortstop, Manny Machado hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning, and San Diego completed a three-game series sweep.

The Padres have won seven straight, all against the two Texas teams.

Athletics 5, Angels 4

Mark Canha hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning, and Oakland improved to 5-0 in extra innings.

Matt Olson made the last out of the ninth, but Franklin Barreto came in to run for him at the start of the 10th. After Matt Chapman singled Barreto to third, the Angels brought the infield in before Canha hit a high fly to center off Ty Buttrey (1-1). Mike Trout made the catch but Barreto scored without a throw.

Cardinals 6, Reds 2

Yadier Molina had four hits and top prospect Dylan Carlson hit his first career homer, helping the Cardinals to the victory.

Harrison Bader also connected for St. Louis, which won three of four in the series. Molina, Carlson and Bader each finished with two RBI.

Rays 5, Blue Jays 4

Josh Fleming pitched five innings of two-run ball for Tampa Bay, winning his major league debut.

Fleming (1-0) is the 11th different starter in 29 games this season for the injury-filled Rays pitching staff.

John Curtiss worked 1 2/3 perfect innings to get his first career save.

Twins 5, Royals 4

Nelson Cruz hit his 10th homer for Minnesota, and closer Taylor Rogers dodged trouble in the ninth inning.

Cruz connected on Trevor Rosenthal's 99-mph fastball for a solo shot that went an estimated 441 feet to center field in the ninth. The drive gave Minnesota a two-run lead and helped the Twins win their eighth series in nine tries this season.

Giants 6, Diamondbacks 1

Mike Yastrzemski celebrated his 30th birthday with a go-ahead home run, and the Giants earned their sixth consecutive victory.

Trevor Cahill and four relievers held the Diamondbacks to five hits, and the Giants completed their first three-game series sweep of the season

Mariners 4, Rangers 1

Kyle Lewis and Sam Haggerty homered and Justin Dunn pitched one-hit ball over six innings, leading Seattle to the win.

The trio of rookies sent the Rangers to their eighth straight loss and helped the Mariners to their first series win and sweep of the season.

Pirates 5, Brewers 4

Gregory Polanco hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning, helping Pittsburgh complete a three-game series sweep.

Polanco connected off David Phelps (2-3) for his fourth homer and finished 2 for 3 with a walk. It was Polanco's second two-hit game in as many days, lifting his batting average from .085 to .151.

Orioles 5, Red Sox 4

Rio Ruiz drove in four runs, Thomas Eshelman provided exceptional relief for injured starter Wade LeBlanc, and the Orioles beat the Red Sox to earn a split of the four-game series.

Anthony Santander stretched his hitting streak to 18 games for the Orioles, who climbed back to .500 (14-14) with their second straight win following a six-game skid.

LIGHTING

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a series of improvement projects that Sablan, though the help of the business sector, is working on since sports and recreation facilities in Precint 2 (Chalan Kanoa, Susupe, and some parts of Finasisu) have sustained damage from two super typhoons in the last six years. Two other facilities—located at CK District 1 and 3—will also undergo a facelift with the latter needing restoration with its flooring.

"The funds have been appropriated and we're just waiting for other documentation requirement so we can start these projects," Sablan said.

The lawmaker also thanked members of the business community for stepping forward, especially and helping improve facilities that benefits the islands' residents, especially the youth. Sablan said he understands that we are in the trying times because COVID-19 pandemic, so he appreciates having partners to work on projects for the community.

The Precint 2 representative added that when restrictions on sports activities and other community events are lifted, he hopes to see the community maximize the availability of the various sports and recreational facilities on the islands.

MRA

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in Guam, Macau, Indonesia, and the Philippines, including the Asian 125CC Senior Motocross Championship Series in 2006.

Mari Alvarez, an MRA member who used to watch Cruz race with her son, Shane, commended the returning rider and called his group the "Fast & the Furious" guys, adding that they still got it even after over a decade of not joining competitive races.

Cruz managed to perform well in MRA's temporary race course (the area surrounding the former Kan Pacific Swimming Pool), but admits missing CNMI motocross' home—the Cowtown Raceway, further down Marpi.

"The course is very appropriate for beginners so they can learn cornering, body positioning, and other basic movement and skills in motocross. The Cowtown Raceway was more technical and would require experience because you could maneuver around it well," said Cruz, who first tried motocross when he was 15 years old and was influenced by his father, Eric, a race organizer.

Cruz hopes to join more races under the revived MRA and encouraged people interested in the sport to come forward.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ellery Cruz poses for a photo before last Sunday's race in Marpi.

"When you are ready to go, there will be people who will help you learn your ways at the track. We are family," Cruz said. "Through the years, motocross has helped me stay connected to people I grew up with and have shared many fun and exciting memories on and off the track."

Meanwhile, besides the Man Aguaguat division, MRA's races last weekend also had the Man'Amko category. Steven Sablan topped the race and was followed by Melvin Cepeda, Glenn Pangelinan, Charles Cepeda, Patrick Cabrera, and Hanky Camacho.

Doncic hits 3 at OT buzzer to lift Mavs

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Bayern beats PSG for 6th Euro Cup

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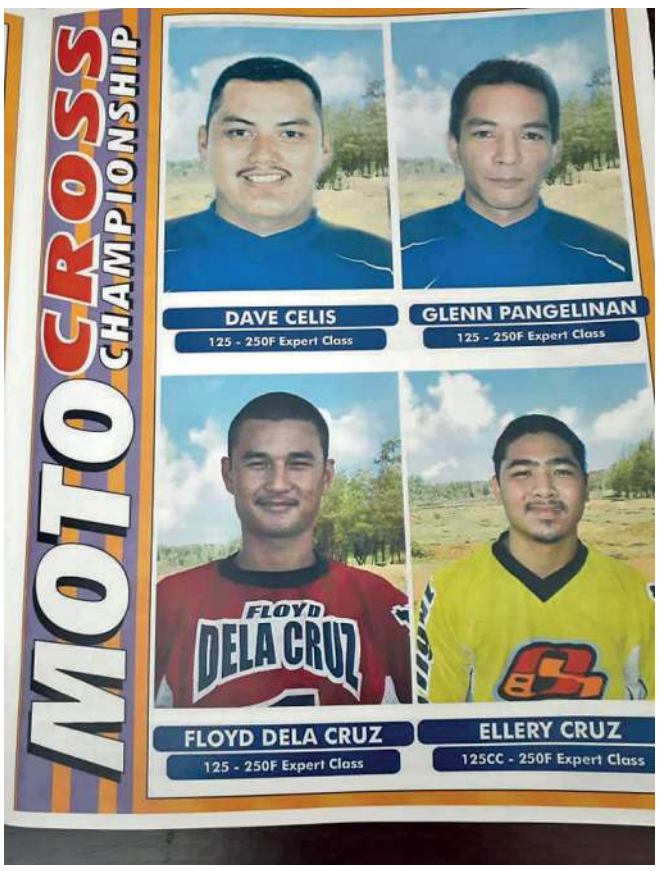
MRA welcomes Cruz back

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A screen grab from Marianas Racing Association's practice races in Marpi shows riders getting ready to head out the course. At far right is Ellery Cruz, who had his first race in 13 years.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Marianas Racing Association welcomed a familiar race on the dirt track as Ellery Cruz joined the group's regular practice races last Sunday in Marpi.



Cruz, one of the CNMI's top riders before, participated in the Man Aguguat division of last weekend's ride, going up against Shane Alvarez, Patrick Togawa, Kier Agda, Ko Santos, and Thomas Reyes. He finished third behind Alvarez and Togawa.

"It's nice to be back. It's my first race in 13 years," said Cruz, who competed for the CNMI from 2004 to 2007 before stepping away from the racetrack and later going off-island for work.

"It's great to see people I race with before and the family I grew up with, as they try to revive motocross on the islands," added Cruz, who rode his old, but reliable 2006 Yamaha YZ250F.

Despite last Sunday's race being his first in more than a decade, Cruz proved he still has the form and skills that allowed him to represent the CNMI in international events

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ellery Cruz's photo was included on the souvenir program for one of the local races on Saipan in the early 2000s.

Lighting fixtures installed at Laly 4 court

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Laly 4 Basketball Court in Chalan Kanoa now has solar lights, while a few more sports and recreational facilities in the villages will get upgrades in the future.

Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan) said that installation of the lighting fixtures at the basketball court was made possible through his office's partnership with NMI Museum director Daniel Aquino, the Saipan Mayor's Office, and HANMI Hardware. Saipan Mayor David Apatang loaned equipment to Sablan's group to install the six solar lights last Saturday.

The installation of lights at the basketball court is part of

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), right, NMI Museum director Daniel Aquino, third left, and their supporters pose for a photo at the Laly 4 Basketball Court, which is now powered with solar lights.